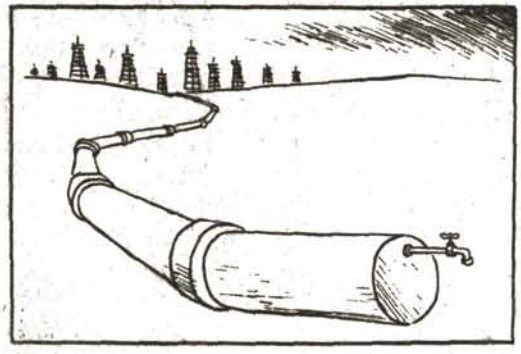
commonweal

The Editors
VETERANS & VIETNAM

ONE DOLLAR

JUNE 22, 1979



The Mexican connection

RICHARD E. KIPLING

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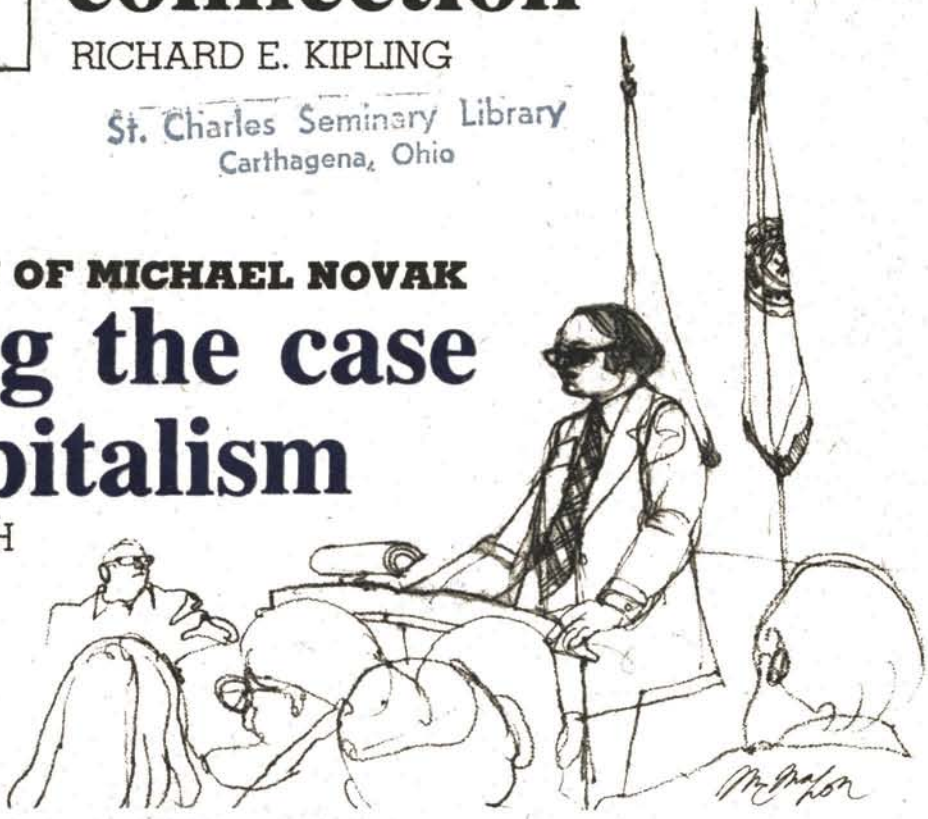
THE ODYSSEY OF MICHAEL NOVAK

Making the case for capitalism

JOSEPH L. WALSH



GEORGE G. HIGGINS **BORN-AGAIN COALITION**

S [illegible] **PSYCHING OUT PATTY**

E [illegible] **WHAT'S NEWS**

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Correspondence

Unpleasant truths

Boston, Mass.

To the Editors: I congratulate you for a thoughtful expression of the present energy dilemma [Editorial, April 27]. You rightly indicate that there is no one solution, nor are there any easy answers. And that is why more debate is necessary.

(1) The perilous trade-offs between electricity generation via nuclear or coal is a very compelling argument for extensive energy conservation. Before we pick sides, we should question how the electricity will be used (whether the uses are trivial) and if there are ways to reduce that demand.

Thus, energy conservation needs to be the cornerstone of our energy policy. But sloganeering will not work. It costs a lot of money to conserve, the kind of money most residents do not have to retrofit old houses. Unless government can provide that "front end" money for conservation, little will happen. It is also expensive to provide energy-efficient public transportation systems at a time when Proposition 13 fever is spreading. Nevertheless, it is still less expensive to conserve than to build new power generating facilities or to find more oil. Furthermore, without significant energy conservation, alternative solar energies will not make a significant contribution to our energy problem during our transition to the post-petroleum era.

2) You should have noted more explicitly the social inequity aspects of decontrol. "Letting prices rise" will always inflict the most severe hardships on those with the least purchasing power. The impacts of soaring costs of heating oil on low and moderate income families in the Northeast is a case in point. Other means to allocate shortages (such as rationing) are more equitable and require serious public discussion. Religious institutions should break their silence on this issue.

3) The language of the energy debate needs to be cleaned up. For instance, one frequently hears about whether solar can compete with nuclear in the free market arena. That debate proceeds as if nuclear were an unsubsidized form of energy. Let's call subsidies (whether direct or indirect) by their right name. Either we remove *all* subsidies, which would destroy the economic feasibility of nuclear power and cause other serious problems, or the government should be prepared to subsidize alternative energies in the same manner as it has subsidized oil, gas and nuclear.

4) You wisely noted the problems of simple solutions. Business blames government for all our woes and speaks of rising prices as the panacea. But business fails to tell us that each new increment of oil and gas is more expensive than the previous one, and that natural limits of petroleum resources is a reality, not an ecologist's fantasy.

The public prefers not to hear unpleasant truths about diminishing resources and new lifestyles, so the big oil companies have become the new villain. Even if oil companies are ripping-off the public (and in some cases they clearly do), there is still a worsening energy problem that cannot be dealt with by improving the social sensitivity of energy firms. The prospects that new energy realities will mean a different kind of future is difficult for people to grapple with, yet it is absolutely essential. Hopefully, religious institutions can play a creative role in helping to shape the transformation of social consciousness that is urgently needed.

NORMAN J. FARAMELLI
Chief, Environment and Energy Planning, Massachusetts Port Aurthority

Indians in Maine

Washington, D.C.

To the Editors: The report by Robert A. Hecht [Mar. 30] on the "The right to remain Indian" showed much understanding of the American Indian's efforts to maintain his cultural values while also struggling to develop modern economic resources and protect treaty rights.

Hecht's statement, however, that the land claim in Maine of the Passamaquoddy and Penobscot Tribes was settled out of court last October is not accurate. A settlement proposal, acceptable to the State of Maine and the large corporate landholders involved, was approved by the White House last October—but not by the tribes. Negotiations have continued and reports indicate that a settlement agreement may be reached shortly.

Any settlement agreement requiring a federal payment of funds must also be submitted to Congress for the necessary legislative action to authorize the expenditures and appropriate the funds.

The *New York Times Magazine* published in February a report that the Maine claim had been settled in October. This was possibly the source of Hecht's misinformation.

We appreciate *Commonweal*'s efforts to keep its readers aware of the continued striving of American Indians to strengthen their communities and to govern their affairs with dignity and justice.

MARTIN E. SENECA, JR.
Acting Deputy Commissioner
U.S. Dept. of the Interior
Bureau of Indian Affairs

(Continued on page 383)

Frank Getlein, HAH!

U.S. Embassy
Jedda, Saudi Arabia

To the Editors: RE: Frank Getlein/ "Peace Divided, HAH!" I particularly enjoyed Mr. Getlein's article which could just as easily been titled: "Don't confuse me with facts, just listen."

I hadn't realized that the Soviet domination of Eastern Europe was a result of

(Continued on page 383)

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commonweal

VETERANS AND VIETNAM

WE ARE MIDWAY between Memorial Day and the 4th of July, and the big story about those holidays is called Gasoline Shortage. But the small story, the lurking, nagging, aching story—the one these patriotic occasions inevitably retrieves from the background where we would rather keep it—is the unsettled and unsettling story of Vietnam.

• "You people ran a number on us," declares Robert Muller, former Marine, paraplegic and executive director of the Council of Vietnam Veterans. "Your guilt, your hang-ups, your uneasiness, made it socially unacceptable to mention the fact that we were Vietnam veterans." Stunning a New York Memorial Day observance into silence, Muller recalls the Vietnam veterans who had succumbed to suicide, drug abuse, alcoholism, or marital problems. The nation, he charges, had treated them as "Lieutenant Calley types, junkies, crazed psychos or dummies that couldn't find their way to Canada."

• The impact of the war on the Americans who fought there and their families at home is portrayed in *The Deer Hunter, Coming Home* and the television feature *Friendly Fire; Hair* revisits the years of protest. Each film is greeted with fierce controversy, accused of caricature, distortion, moral insensitivity.

• Anti-war activists, led by Joan Baez, place an advertisement in five American newspapers protesting Vietnam's violations of fundamental human rights. As with the continuing exodus of boat people, this event provokes claims from supporters of the war that they have been proven right. It also elicits criticism from other anti-war activists who feel that such protests are misdirected and only serve to absolve the U.S. of its responsibility.

• The battle of the books continues. Guenter Lewy's *America in Vietnam* argues the legality, though not the prudence, of American military action. William Shawcross's *Sideshow* traces the suffering of Cambodia, including the rise of Pol Pot's ruthless Khmer Rouge, to the miscalculations and deceptions of American policymakers.

• Public discussion about Soviet military might, about intervention in the Middle East, about an alleged "failure of nerve" among U.S. elites reopens the question of the "lessons" of Vietnam and whether America has overlearned them—or learned them at all.

• Uncertainly about the sufficiency of an all-volunteer army and a move in Congress to reinstitute military registration of young males revives fears of military adventurism as well as arguments about the inequities of wealth and education that affect the make-up of the military.

• A Supreme Court decision justifying preferential treatment of veterans despite claims of sex bias focuses attention again on the difficulties of fair compensation for military service.

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In the days when the Nixon administration attempted to capitalize on the plight of American POWs in Vietnam, a bumper sticker appeared with the phrase, "We Are All Prisoners of War." We were not all prisoners of war in the literal sense; but those with any memory can confirm how profoundly the war seized hold of our minds and feelings. In similar fashion, today's bumper sticker might read, "We Are All Vietnam Veterans," not to expropriate the often terrible and always personal experience of those who served there but to recognize the common involvement, responsibility and bafflement of the nation.

What understanding is possible, however, will not be advanced by falsifying the historical record or softening the moral difficulties. It is not true, for example, that the anti-war movement was anti-soldier or anti-veteran. Some of the earliest expressions of concern that Vietnam veterans were being shortchanged in their benefits emanated from the anti-war movement. It remains true, no doubt, that the Vietnam veteran's situation is complicated by the belief that the war was nothing to be proud of. According to a recent poll, almost three-quarters of the public now hold that "the Vietnam war was more than a mistake, it was fundamentally wrong and immoral." Those who were tragically maimed, who lost precious years of their lives, who suffered and still suffer from a variety of war-inflicted disabilities have every claim on the nation's aid and support. But they cannot expect the war in which they participated to be celebrated as past wars have been. (Indeed many of them are probably less interested in such celebration—even opposed to it—than are those who sent them to Southeast Asia.) Sentimentality may have its therapeutic uses, but in this case the moral cost, for the whole society of which these veterans are part, would be exorbitant. The discomfort that veterans sense among their fellow citizens is probably less the result of Americans' having come to a negative moral judgment on the war than the result of having reached that position so late in the conflict. A bad conscience will not be relieved by adding another belated reversal of opinion.

The same duty to the historical record and moral principle ought to govern the debate about Vietnam's violations of human rights and the resurrected claims of war supporters. To begin with, only a distinct though very vocal minority of those opposed to the war harbored rosy illusions about the nature of the adversary. In the key editorial, written 13 years ago, in which this magazine went beyond specific criticisms of U.S. policy to a flat condemnation, the editors wrote: "Measured not by declared intentions but by past performance, a Communist victory in South Vietnam would most likely mean a rigorous dictatorship, bloody liquidation of dissenters, and a certain amount of social and economic reform. By the same standards, a Saigon victory will probably mean a looser form of authoritarian government, suppression of radical dissent rather than its liquidation, and little alteration in the status quo." The conclusion to condemn the war was based on the fact that vastly disproportionate and destructive force was being expanded to decide between these outcomes—and even then without any foreseeable certainty of accomplishing one rather than the other.

If what turned out to be a realistic estimate of the prospects for Vietnam did not justify an open-ended continuation of American involvement in 1966, it is hard to see why it should justify that involvement retroactively. At the same time, there is nothing in that argument which should militate against recognition of Communis oppression—and protest against it. The arguments against denouncing that oppression on the grounds that protests give comfort to those responsible for America's involvement seem no more persuasive than the argument for celebrating the war in order to improve the situation of those who were honorably caught up in fighting it.

The precise "lessons" of Vietnam will be debated for years to come. At the moment, the public seems to have learned to be wary about proposed military intervention anywhere but in Europe and to prefer a less activist and less "missionary" American foreign policy. The public is increasingly worried about Soviet power and willing to spend more on U.S. defense. Two-thirds of the public and an even higher percentage of its leadership consider that the U.S. has been a "force for good" in the world since World War II. Only nine percent of the public and less than half that of its leaders think the U.S. has been a "force for evil." And the major finding of most studies of public opinion about Vietnam—that the Presidency could lead the nation in the direction it wished in foreign policy—appears to remain true. So much for "failure of nerve." It does not look like the lessons of Vietnam are being overlearned.

Religion & labor

BORN-AGAIN COALITION?

A MODEST BEGINNING

MORE THAN 100 representatives of unions and religiously-oriented social action organizations met in Washington, D.C., May 16-18 to consider what, if anything, might be done to develop a closer on-going relationship between the labor movement and the churches. As recently as five years ago, it would have been difficult, if not impossible, to put together a meeting of this kind. In the late '30s, the '40s and even into the '50s, church-related social action organizations, at least in the Catholic community, concentrated almost exclusively on the labor problem. There were more than 100 Catholic labor schools going full blast during that period. There were also several labor-oriented Catholic organizations, including, for example, the Catholic Radical Alliance of Pittsburgh, the Chicago Catholic Council on Working Life, and several chapters of the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists. With few exceptions, however, these membership organizations and training centers had

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quietly gone out of business by 1960—so quietly, in fact, that their passing was hardly even noticed. I dare say, in this connection, that the majority of those who, in the '60s and early '70s, thought of themselves as being Catholic social activists were hardly even aware that these earlier organizations and labor schools had existed in the first place. *Sic transit!*

Personally I see no reason to lament, much less romanticize, the '30s and '40s. For present purposes, it is enough to say that the religiously-oriented activists of the '60s and early '70s concentrated, understandably, on a set of problems different from those of the Depression era and the post-World War II period—problems which, rightly or wrongly, they thought of as being more urgent than those occupying the labor movement. The labor problem, for whatever set of reasons, was not one of their top priorities. Fair enough. One has the impression, however, that some of these activists not only ignored the labor movement but unfortunately became rather cynical about it and saw no point even in talking about the possibility of reestablishing the kind of church-labor relationship which their predecessors had so laboriouly put together in the '30s and the '40s.

A few years ago, the tide began to turn again. Gradually and, at first, very informally, some of the "oldtimers"—and, more significantly, some younger activists as well—started talking among themselves about the need for an updated church-labor coalition or network. In November, 1976, Msgr. John Egan sponsored an informal church-labor seminar at Notre Dame University. A Chicagoan who, like so many of us, had been greatly influenced by the recently deceased Msgr. Reynold Hillenbrand (surely one of the most significant figures in recent history of American Catholicism),Msgr. Egan had come to appreciate, through personal experience, the value of organizations like the Chicago Catholic Council on Working Life. Although this experimental gathering at Notre Dame was never meant to be more than a one-shot affair, it produced enough consensus about the need for a structured relationship between the church and labor to prompt one of the participants, Joe Holland of the Jesuit-sponsored Center of Concern in Washington, D.C., to begin laying the groundwork for a somewhat more ambitious round of meetings between the two groups. Encouraged by the results of these preliminary gab sessions, the Center of Concern, again in cooperation with a fairly representative ecumenical church-labor committee, convened the May 16-18 National Conference on Religion and Labor.

Early on in the Conference, one of the participants soliloquized as to why the hundred-odd church and labor delegates had jumped at the opportunity to take part in such a meeting. "We are all here," he opined, "because we are running scared." Another participant, representing a major industrial union, struck a more positive note. "We are here," he said, "not because we are running scared, but because we have come to learn by experience that coalitions or networks of like-minded people are needed to meet the serious challenges we jointly face."

Both speakers were probably saying substantially the same thing. It had suddenly dawned on both groups that our nation is now at a crucial turning point, that we are all in the same boat together, and that the time has come for people with more or less common agendas to join together in a cooperative effort to redeem the time. I also had the impression that the church-related groups, for their part, had come to understand more clearly than they had understood in the '60s and early '70s that far-reaching systemic changes are called for in the American economy and that such changes will never be effected unless organized labor takes the lead in bringing them about.

All things consisdered, the Washington Conference was a modest but significant first step in the right direction. It was not, of course, a truly "national" gathering. The majority of the participants came from the Northeastern sector of the United States and from the Old South, and the percentage of church-related delegates was higher than the percentage of union participants. Despite these and other limitations, it was an important conference. The give-and-take between and within the two sponsoring groups was at all times completely frank and open and was uniformly positive and constructive in tone.

From the ecumenical point of view, the Conference was one of the best meetings of its kind I have ever attended. I did not hear—or even over-hear—a single syllable that could be described as defensive or polemical. Nobody was trying to score points. Both in public and in private, the Catholic, Protestant and Jewish participants spoke with one voice, out of a common commitment to the cause of social justice and a common conviction that, while a closer church-labor relationship will presumably be good for labor, it will also be good for religion. Michael Harrington, who gave the only formal address, struck a responsive note when he said in passing that part of the spiritual drift in American society today is economic in origin. So long as we are unable or unwilling to solve our basic economic problems, people will drift toward a privatized and highly individualistic form of religion, with disastrous results for all concerned.

Having primarily concentrated, by design, on procedural matters, the participants unanimously adopted an interim plan which will include broadening interest in the religious and labor communities (primarily at the local level), publishing a detailed report on the Washington meeting, issuing an occasional newsletter, developing a number of national issues for future consideration,evaluating progress after six months, and sponsoring a larger, more formal, and more highly structured meeting a year from now.

During the interim period between now and next year's conference, a representative planning committee will concentrate on expanding the geographical scope of the project and generating interest and support among groups inadequately represented at the Washington meeting. There was unanimous agreement that a special effort should be made to involve more women in the project and more representatives of the Black and Hispanic communities. It was also agreed that, on the religious side, the planning committee ought to strive to in-

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volve more people from the Evangelical and Pentecostal traditions, particularly in the Old South. The Old South, where Evangelicals and Pentecostals are proportionately more influential than the mainline churches, will increasingly be a key—if not *the* key—geographical area in the field of church-labor relations. One of the Southern participants made the point that the separation between the churches and labor in the Old South (meaning principally the separation between Evangelicals and Pentecostals and organized labor) has contributed more than any single factor to the impoverishment of the great masses of people in that area. The same speaker—and other delegates as well—strongly emphasized a new realization in the South, that there needs to be a closer on-going relationship between labor and religion. Speaking as a Yankee and therefore as one less wise, I would agree with this cautiously optimistic assessment. Better days are definitely coming in that area, thanks to a growing social awareness in the churches in general and, however hesitant, in the Evangelical and Pentecostal churches as well. If, in the short run, the church-labor coalition or network which the Conference has tentatively projected does nothing more than encourage and give aid and assistance to this hopeful development, it will have justified its existence.

Experience has taught me to restrain my enthusiasm about meetings of this type. Yet I am reasonably optimistic about this one. It was a significant step in the right direction, and I fully expect it to result in a modest but potentially important church-labor network within two or three years. The sooner the better.

GEORGE G. HIGGINS

(Monsignor George G. Higgins, a long-time contributor, is Secretary for Special Concerns, United States Catholic Conference.)

Geneva dialogue

VISION OF SHALOM

THE CHURCHES ON ARMS CONTROL

A CONFERENCE OF Soviet and American church leaders has, with one heart and one voice, sounded an alarm over the escalating arms race and called on the peoples of the world to exorcise the demon of nuclear holocaust.

Ten representatives from the National Council of Churches and its affiliates met in Geneva last March with an equal number of counterparts from five Russian ecclesiastical bodies. The conference participants recommended a common program of action on arms control to their respective denominations, calling for passage and implementation of SALT II, a total ban on nuclear weapons tests, support of UN disarmament initiatives, encouragement of ecumenical arms control advocacy, under the aegis of the World Council of Churches, and commitment of funding and staff support for Christian education on the issues of the arms race.

The Geneva conference is a new stage in the twenty-five-year-old dialogue of Soviet and American Christian leaders, and is the first such meeting to focus on a single moral issue.

A joint statement adopted by the delegates urged the world's peoples to "choose life, that you and your descendants may live." Taking a stand against the danger of "still more terrible weapons," the church leaders affirmed, "Against this, we say with one voice—No. In the name of God—No."

The conferees believed that nuclear conflict was a probability by the 1990s unless the arms race was called to a halt. The greater accuracy of warheads and shorter lead times to respond to a suspected attack vastly increase the temptation for one side to resort to a first strike at a time of crisis, and many military strategists have turned from a theory of mutually assured destruction to the belief that an atomic war is winnable.

In this context of urgency, the delegates felt that although SALT II does not go far enough in containing armaments, it should be welcomed as an essential first step in building a momentum for peace and paving the way for more sweeping across-the-board arms limitation in SALT III.

From every quarter, the delegates reported that they had arrived at a deep and authentic meeting of mind and will as they prepared their joint statement. Metropolitan Juvenaly of Krutitsky and Kolomna remarked that in a generation of American and Russian church dialogue "There had never been such mutual understanding as we had at this meeting."

Alice Wimer, Executive for International Affairs of the National Council of Churches, recalled that "I was almost in tears when we got to the end of the statement. It was a cry from the heart, a cry of passion and urgency. The members of the drafting committee had obviously done their homework, and achieved unity of spirit."

As Ms. Wimer indicated, the theological "homework" of the conferees reveals much about the shaping of their consensus, although it also illumninates the differences in cultural and historical perspective between the churches of the two superpowers. Working papers prepared in advance of the meeting by Metropolitan Juvenaly of Krutitsky and Kolomna, and by Bruce Rigdon of McCormick Theological Seminary, lay the groundwork for the discussion which produced the joint statement.

Bishop Juvenaly argues that peace is a gift of the Spirit and the pre-eminent sign of the life of God's Kingdom. Here the teachings of Scripture and the traditions of Russian theology and mysticism speak with one accord. Because peacemaking is a calling of the first magnitude for Russian Christians, the churches of the USSR have attempted to fulfill that vocation by establishing relationships of brotherhood with American Christians.

Bishop Juvenaly's article bears witness to the delicacy Soviet church leaders must adopt in commenting on public policy, particularly as it pertains to their own government. The Metropolitan repeatedly cites statements of Leonid Brezhnev in support of arms control, and refers to seventy Soviet initia-

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tives on disarmament in the postwar years. He implies that the Kremlin is already moving in the right direction, and there is no overt scrutiny of Soviet actions which contribute to the balance of terror. To Americans nurtured in the antiwar movement, the document appears muted, and reflects plainly the constraints on political advocacy in the USSR. One has the sense that the Bishop is attempting positive reinforcement, hoping through his praise of Soviet peace diplomacy to spur even greater efforts from his government. There can be no doubt, however, that the Metropolitan's concern for arms control is personal and heartfelt, and he becomes truly eloquent in his vision of presenting the Creator not with a "lifeless, burnt out, devastated land" but a "blooming garden," a millennium of harmony.

Dr. Rigdon's preparatory essay, "Taming the Principalities and the Powers," is an exegesis of St. Paul's Epistle to the Colossians. In Colossians, the Apostle announces the subjugation to the triumphant Savior of those forces which, in ancient cosmology, were believed to govern the courses of nature and the affairs of men. Dr. Rigdon urges Christians to call upon the resources of their faith to battle the principalities and powers of our present age: an uncontrolled technology which imposes its own death-dealing internal logic on the decisions of statesmen; the military-industrial complex and the war economy which it sustains; fear-ridden nationalisms which mask inner despair. For Rigdon the arms race is a form of madness, promising sham security while increasing geometrically the prospect of catastrophe. He does not believes in facile optimism about the task of waging peace, but rather that God does govern the world, and can give mankind the victory over today's "principalities and powers."

Only time will tell whether the Geneva conference leads to measurable long-term results. Dr. Arie R. Brouwer, General Secretary of the Reformed Church in America, felt encouraged that those who attended were denominational executives who could have impact on their respective communions. The Rev. Avery D. Post, President of the United Church of Christ, said that he would urge his organization's annual synod to conduct programs of grass-roots education and consciouness-raising on the subject of arms control. Alice Wimer of the NCC cautioned that one must expect "inevitable tough bargaining about allocation of resources," but she hoped that the Council would provide expertise and resources to local church afffiliates who wished to organize for political action.

While the churches of Russia share enthusiasm for the cause, their contribution will, in practical terms, be circumscribed by the realities of history and contemporary politics. Not least among these realities is the danger of naked, unconstitutional police power in the USSR. But there are other contrasts with the Western situation. The churches of the West have been renewed and nourished by an apostolic succession of prophets who have called to judgment a godless established order. Our century has not been wanting in heirs to this legacy: A.J. Muste, Dorothy Day, Emmanuel Mounier, Pope Paul VI, Martin Luther King. But historically, the church of Russia has tended to witness more by the example of its own inner life than by formulating explicit political programs. Americans have much to learn from Russia's Christians about perseverance under persecution, the quest for personal sanctification, the richness of monastic and community life, and the praise of God's glory in his whole creation, the "Divinization" of the cosmos. Nevertheless, the prophetic dimension has suffered in "official" Russian Christianity, the casualty of centuries of Czarist protection and control, and in latter days of Communist persecution.

Even though many Orthodox intellectuals called for drastic political reform in the waning years of the Russian empire, the church was hopelessly identified with the old regime at the onset of the Revolution. As the Bolsheviks tried to build, in one generation, a homeland fit for the "new Soviet man," they assaulted the churches with a ferocity nourished by disillusionment. The precepts of the Gospel about distributive justice came back to haunt the Russian churches in the mouth of Lenin.

Under the Communist government, Russian Christians were placed in a dilemma similar to that of many Catholic immigrants to America: the need to preserve one's cultural heritage while proving one's loyalty and patriotism toward the established order. Held in suspicion by a dominant Protestant society, it is no wonder that Catholic leaders became stout champions of the American way of life, and that the catechism Jimmy Breslin learned in the Diocese of Brooklyn was as much an exercise in Americanism as in Christianity.

In Russia, church leaders believe it equally imperative to demonstrate their loyalty to the present government, and many among them feel genuine respect for what the regime has accomplished in elevating the standard of life and self-respect of working people. After decades of oscillation between persecution and grudging accommodation, the regime appears to be developing a rough *modus vivendi* with the churches, where the churches are allowed a limited measure of freedom if they will in turn support official socialism.

American delegates to Geneva stressed that Russia's ecclesiastical authorities could not be expected to challenge head on the repressive policies of the Kremlin, for this would be considered tantamount to treason. But one observer noted that Moscow policy-makers do take the churches seriously as a force in the shaping of public opinion, and pay some regard to the counsel of Christian leaders, so long as this counsel is presented in the spirit of "friendly persuasion." All in all, American delegates felt that the Russian church could help

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bring about a climate favorable to Kremlin doves, an atmosphere "in which disarmament is possible." They also stressed the importance of the international dialogue in breaking down the isolation under which the Russian church has had to survive. The prestige and publicity surrounding such consultations afford the Russians more leverage in getting a hearing for their views in official quarters.

While the practical consequences of Geneva are yet to be seen, it is sometimes inaccurate to measure religious developments in purely political terms. The spirit blows where it wills; from a grain of mustard seed can blossom a tree sturdy enough to shelter the birds of the air. Asked if the churches had embarked on a quixotic crusade in their quest for arms control, Dr. Arie Brouwer replied, "This is one windmill we're going to have to tilt. There isn't much factual basis for optimism, but our faith isn't founded on that. The ground of our faith is Jesus Christ."

DAVID DILLON

(David Dillon is a free-lance writer and historian working out of Iowa and New York City.)

Of several minds: *Thomas Powers*

THE UNWANTED

A WORLD IN FLIGHT

WHAT IS a man worth? It depends on the circumstances. The chief executive officers of some of the Fortune 500 are worth, or are at least paid, as much as a million dollars a year. An American in a coma may be worth, or at least cost, $100,000 a year in hospital fees. President Nixon, never a sentimental man, decided that young blacks from inner-city ghettos were not worth the $10,000-$12,000 it cost to maintain them in job training programs, although Nixon himself is worth, or at least gets, several hundred thousand dollars a year from the American people to help him send out Christmas cards. A mother and her two children on welfare in New York may be worth, say, $479 a month, but the money is surrendered so grudgingly it is probably fair to conclude that taxpayers do not really think they are worth it.

The market in men rises and falls. The price of gold is steady by comparision. Not so long ago the American government was willing to spend $100,000 to kill a single North Vietnamese or Vietcong soldier, a value calculated by simply dividing the cost of the war by the estimated number of dead. For simplicity's sake I have used the figures of $100 billion and one million respectively; both, very likely, are underestimates. South Vietnamese refugees, in the years between 1961 and 1975, were, interestingly, worth a great deal less, probably a dollar or two a day. This narrow corner of the market is remarkably stable. In 1977, for example, the United Nations maintained 15 camps for about 40,000 Laotian refugees in Thailand at a cost of $16.4 million, which comes to $410 per person per year. The United States paid roughly 65 percent of the bill, which was $10.66 million, or $266.50 per person per year.

But it is misleading to say that a Meo tribesman from the hills of Laos is worth $410 a year, since the United States does not really want them. Nor does anyone else, with the possible exception of the Laotians. It's a question of interpretation. On the one hand the Laotians and their North Vietnamese allies have been conducting a military campaign against the Meos still remaining inside Laos. The Meos cite the bombing of villages and the poisoning of wells as evidence that the campaign against them is genocidal. Doubtless they exaggerate. Evidence that the Laotians really value the Meos, and want to kept them, can be found in the fact they attempt to capture or kill all the Meos they find trying to escape across the Mekong River into Thailand. Those captured are sent to "reeducation" camps, where they are organized into labor battalions. Apparently the Meos are slow learners, because none of those sent to the camps ever return.

But even if, on balance, we must conclude that the Laotians do want the Meos, it is certainly clear no one else does. The same goes for all the other refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, who can be divided into two groups. The best known are the boat people from Vietnam, of whom there are now about 125,000 in camps in Hong Kong, Indonesia, the Philippines and Malaysia, where they are aso sincerely and deeply unwanted that new arrivals are frequently pushed back out to sea to drown or die of exposure or starvation or dehydration or otherwise provide for themselves. More numerous are the so-called land people, roughly a quarter of a million of them who have fled war in Cambodia and the rigors of the new regime in Laos.

But even these numbers, large as they are, present only a fraction of the problem. At a recent international meeting held in Jakarta to consider the refugee problem a Vietnamese diplomat, Vu Hoang, said that a great many more Vietnamese wanted to leave, perhaps as many as 600,000. Vietnam, he said, will help to arrange their departure if countries can be found to give them asylum. This would spare the unfortunates the rigors of the open sea, which has already claimed the lives of countless thousands. The captain of a British-owned freighter, the Sibonga, rescued 982 refugees from two boats he discovered sinking about 100 miles off the Vietnamese coast in mid-May. Shipping companies have been reluctant to pick up refugees, however desperate their plight, because of the difficulty in finding a port which would allow them to disembark. In this instance the captain, Healey Martin, said he had decided to go ahead after watching the refugees throw a dead baby into the sea. He was allowed to disembark the refu-

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gees in Hong Kong, which has acquired nearly 30,000 boat people since the first of the year.

At the Jakarta conference Vu Hoang did not mention a yet-larger group of potential refugees whom the Vietnamese have already been encouraging to leave—1.5 million ethnic Chinese. The capacity of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos to generate refugees is practically endless, and despite the fact many of them are well-educated, hard-working and ambitious, nobody wants them. Nobody wishes them ill, exactly, but nobody wants them. The countries which have been pushing them back out to sea are hard-hearted from simple realism: once they are ashore the rest of the world can effectively shut their minds to them through the simple expedient of supporting them for a dollar or two a day. The American Citizens Commission on Indochinese Refugees, established by the International Rescue Committee, has called on President Carter to accept 100,000 refugees this year, a goal, if reached, which would allow the United States to pressure other countries to increase their quotas. The strategy is a perfectly sensible one but it only emphasizes the grudging and sluggish attempts of the world to find a solution that would be more humane and less final for the problem of the refugees.

Vietnam itself, sofar as can be determined from the reports of refugees, has taken a relatively enlightened attitude toward its former enemies. Revolutionary regimes in Russia and China simply killed the disaffected. It is a matter of continuing scholarly controversy just how many Kulaks were starved in the Ukraine, for example, or how many "landlords" were shot in China. Certainly the numbers were very large. "Reeducation" may be indistinguishable from imprisonment, and its true goal is probably cheap labor rather than reconciliation, but it is better than a bullet in the back of the head. Fidel Castro seems to have set an example in this regard by exporting half a million class enemies to the United States. It is hard to see how so many people could have escaped from Vietnam, in particular, if the government had been truly concerned to

AN APPEAL TO OUR READERS

THIS FALL *Commonweal* will complete 55 years of publication. As we approach that milestone the opportunity for the magazine is greater than ever. Dissatisfaction with our society's ethical and political drift is creating a greater and greater receptivity to the kinds of moral and religious perspective *Commonweal* has long tried to provide. The turbulence of post-Vatican Council Catholicism seems to be settling into a quieter, more confident mood of religious reappropriation and reinvigoration. The pontificate of John Paul II provokes new hopes.

Offsetting this encouraging prospect is continued escalation of the cost of producing and distributing the magazine. During the years when the general cost of living index doubled, *Commonweal*'s cost of printing has increased by 400 percent, the cost of mailing an issue by 750 percent! On July 6 the latest hike in mailing charges will increase our year's expenses by another $7,000.

Despite a remarkable 80 percent subscription renewal rate, *Commonweal* needs to replace some 4,000 subscribers a year—just to maintain our circulation. That requires sizable funds for carrying out carefully tested promotion and direct mailing. *Commonweal* has survived the increased costs of recent years only through the generous help of the Commonweal Associates. But we want to do more than survive. We want to take advantage of the current opportunities. We want to put the journal on the sound financial footing which alone will allow us to transform survival into expansion.

We have sent *Commonweal* readers a much longer explanation of our hopes and our needs. This is our first general appeal to subscribers in five years. At this crucial moment in our publishing history, we urge our readers to join the Commonweal Associates. And to those for whom this is not feasible we ask that you send whatever you can manage.

COMMONWEAL ASSOCIATES, 232 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016

Please enroll me as a 1979 Associate to enable *Commonweal* to continue its work.

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keep them at home. The situation in Cambodia is more anarchic but the effect is the same, a great mass of people for whom sustenance, and eventually a home, must be found. The problem won't go away. The sanitary conditions, "drinking" water and daily rations in the camps undoubtedly result in a high mortality rate, especially among children, but they cannot all be counted on to die. The survivors belong to us, and we must do something about them, even if there is precious little enthusiasm to do something for them.

At the moment about 10,000 refugees a month are being resettled in other countries, mainly the United States, Australia, France and Canada. This represents a substantial effort, but we are losing ground all the same. About 20,000 new refugees escape every month and the flow has been increasing steadily for more than two years. Indonesia has offered the use of an island for temporary housing, but only if the rest of the world—which means principally the United States—is willing to pay for the program and to guarantee they won't be abandoned in the end as wards of the Indonesian government.

These are several ways of looking at the problem. The first, of course, is from a humanitarian point of view. They are in desperate need. Since they have no country, and no government bears a primary responsibility for their welfare, they belong, in a sense, to all of us. Doubtless other peoples are in even worse shape, the street people of Calcutta, say, or the peasants of Haiti, but while their fate may tug at our conscience, they have not been dumped in our laps. The only thing to do with a drowning man, is to pull him out of the water.

But it is fair to ask, at the same time, how he got into the water in the first place. This does not suggest another recounting of the recent history of Indochina, which is clear enough but too particular for our purpose. The production of refugees has been a commonplace of the 20th century, a side effect of countless political struggles which provide no room for losers. We can see the gentlest expression of this human tendency in the American two-party system, in which victory at the polls over a party in power is always followed by a reshuffling in every job within reach of the victor. The spoils system. It has been the good fortune of Anglo-Saxon countries—and of a few others, too—that victors by custom have been modest in their claim of spoils. Elsewhere more than public jobs have been at stake. With gloomy frequency, in fact, victors have claimed everything in sight—not just land and capital, but a monopoly of political rights, access to education, language, exclusive religious hegemony, even culture and history. When so much is seized from so many, as Calvin Coolidge might have said, refugees result. Revolutions are of course notorious for the immodesty of the victors' claims. If so many Vietnamese have dared the open sea in leaking boats, if so many Cambodians and Laotians have risked the Mekong under the guns of guards, it is because their conquerors had looted them of everything but the human courage to go where they might be treated as men. Of course it ought to be added that if those who are refugees now had been luckier in battle, the flow of the dispossessed would simply have been in another direction. This is not an argument that the wrong side won the war, just an Anglo-Saxon's reflection that political struggle expresses the darkest, cruelest side of the human heart.

An interesting point, but not one of much use to the refugees of Southeast Asia. They are hard to keep in mind. If one could point to a villain—the cruel oppressors who drove them from home, flinty government officials indifferent to their fate, unionists alarmed by the threat of cheap labor to the living standard of the American working man—it would be easier to whip up a little passion in the refugees' behalf. But there are no true villians, only faint hearts and grudging duty. So the refugees wait—those lucky enough to have lived to wait—while officials mills slowly grind, tidying up the debris of war. THOMAS POWERS

Of several minds: *John Garvey*

THE LONG SEARCH

WHERE RELIGION IS LIVED

AFTER A PARTICULARLY horrible liturgy I recently attended (it included a banner which read "Jesus Christ requests the honor of your presence at a dinner to be held in his honor," and a sermon about how we must be witnesses for life, which included a reference, of course, to abortion, and not one, of course, about capital punishment, poverty, or the arms race) I thought with some sympathy of several friends who no longer have any connection with Catholicism. They wonder why anyone does, and after this liturgy I was asking myself the same question. My answer was feeble, but enough for me at the moment: I believe that despite everything, the bread is the body of Christ.

But could I think that, if everything I had ever encountered in the church seemed to contradict the gratitude which the eucharist is about? If all through my growing up I had been told not to question anything, or if Catholicism had been presented entirely as a matter of discipline, obedience and the avoidance of sin, I don't know that I would still be Catholic. On the other hand, it seems to me shortsighted to look only at the stupid sexual instruction received in Catholic schools, and not at Augustine or Francis of Assisi or Thomas More. It is narrow to look only at the cowardice of the institutional church in the face of Nazism, and ignore the deaths of Edith Stein, Franz Jaggerstatter and Maximilian Kolbe. It is entirely right to criticize and (especially in the case of its failure to confront Nazism) condemn the institution; but it is wrong to reduce the whole of Catholi-

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cism to this level and dismiss it, as if Catholicism were no more than cautious institutional self-interest—though at one level it has, to its shame, been just that.

Here is a fascinating fact: a lot of conservative Catholics are in full agreement with anti-Catholic writers, where the nature of the church is concerned. Both sets of people regard Catholicism as a monolithic thing which tells people what they must think if they are to be Catholics, and there is never any ambiguity about what must be accepted; both see the church as entirely congruent with the hierarchical set-up—there is the *Magisterium* (meaning the Pope and his mouthpieces, the bishops), and the rest of us simply obey; and both groups are confused and even a little irritated when Catholic people don't act as they are supposed to. Nothing could be less helpful, less informative, nothing could be less *saving* than the thing they insist the church must be. It is this church which some people leave (and some join it, because they want to have, at last, all the answers).

Many leave the church out of boredom, or disappointment, or a sense that the answers offered don't have much to do with the problems encountered. It is by no means clear that if the church did whatever it ought to be doing, to be true to its own best self, it would lose any fewer people—more might leave, in fact. The sermon on the mount is *pleasant* reading only if you can ignore much of what it says.

For all Christians in our society the main problem is one of excessive familiarity. We think we know what Christianity is about. The words are familiar, the institutions are familiar, many of the easier ethical assumptions of Christianity are nearly second nature. We are far from Christianity encountered as a new thing, as good news, or anything much more than stale ethics combined with a myth which looks, at times, much too simple.

If so many of us are bored by the religious traditions from which we come, and if—as is clearly the case—people now feel that they may choose to leave the traditions they come from, they are free not only to leave but also to choose alternatives, and to see other religions as possible ways of life. There is one problem with this: we can see our own tradition's faults very clearly, and can be easily impressed with the strengths of an alternative tradition, while ignoring our own. To look from the perspective of the graffiti on St. Rose of Lima grade school lavatory walls to the best anthologies of Buddhist scripture, ignoring the boredom of Buddhist children and the writings of John of the Cross, is not the best way to view either tradition. It is probably good to acknowledge all of the junk in any given tradition at the outset (Hindu popular religious art, for example, rivals the worst Catholic holy cards) in order to get it out of the way, so that the real things can be seen. These "real things" include popular strengths as well as the greatest writings and personal achievements; they will include sacraments and pilgrimages as well as Nagarjuna and Aquinas.

This is what was so exciting about the excellent BBC series *The Long Search*, which was conducted by ("hosted" is certainly too crude a word) Ronald Eyre. PBS has begun to show it a second time, and I hope it continues to re-run for years. The subject was religion, but unlike the usual introduction to world religious traditions, which involves a concentration on major doctrines and history, the focus of this series was intensely personal: What does Zen mean to the way a Japanese businessman spends his day? What place does Catholicism occupy in the life of a British housewife, or Buddhism in the life of a novice monk? As important as the official teachings of a religion are (and the series did not slight them), it is what a religion is, in a particular life, that makes it real. *The Long Search* covered Protestantism, Catholicism, Orthodoxy, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Japanese and Chinese religion, tribal religion, and—an important addition—the new religions. The questions Eyre raised were both pointed and sensitive. In every case the effort was made to examine the tradition from the point of view of articulate insiders.

The program devoted to Catholicism was as fine as anything in the series. Issues like papal infallibility, divorce, abortion and other controversial aspects of Catholicism were pointedly *not* discussed; these are not what the church is finally about. Eyre looked instead at the places where Catholicism is lived: the home of an English Catholic family; a community of the Little Brothers of Jesus (who work at working-class jobs and live a monastic life, though their poverty is not the traditional religious sort but the real poverty of the urban poor); and the Spanish novitiate of the Little Brothers, where solitude is central to spiritual formation. Although there was some time spent on such subjects as the rich inclusiveness of Catholic pilgrimages, the emphasis of the program was on the contemplative and eucharistic center of Catholicism. It was an extraordinarily moving presentation.

So were the other programs, all of them well written, well edited and beautifully photographed. In emphasizing the personal urgency of the questions with which the great religions deal, Eyre managed to cut through the less important concerns to the essential ones; religion was presented not as a primarily organizational thing, but as something alive. In conjunction with the series Ninian Smart, who served as the series advisor, has written a handsomely illustrated book (*The Long Search*, Little Brown, $17.50). It is entertaining reading, and there are some interesting conclusions at the end of the book, including the suggestion that Buddhism's emphasis on meditation as a means to clear perception could be of great help to Christianity. But the book doesn't have the impact or depth of the series, perhaps because it couldn't capture, as film could, particular people: an articulate Catholic laywoman, whose discussion of her faith was sensitive and completely unsentimental; a Buddhist monk, whose explanation of the idea of enlightenment was punctuated with quick laughter; an old Hindu, once a politician and socialist agitator, who had left everything, including his name, for a life of prayer and devotion. *The Long Search* goes a long way toward showing why, despite everything, people remain Catholic—and Jewish, and Hindu, and Buddhist.

JOHN GARVEY

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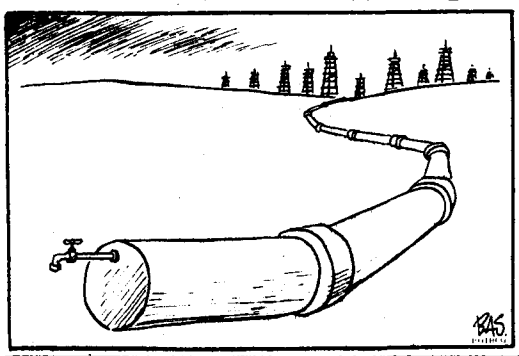
DON'T BURN THAT OIL BEFORE IT'S PIPED



The Mexican connection

RICHARD E. KIPLING

"MEXICO," according to Glenn Rase, the U.S. Embassy's petroleum officer in Mexico City, "provides the United States with the possibility of diversifying our petroleum sources, securing a dependable supply, and building better relations with a good trading partner." Jimmy Carter couldn't agree more. From the White House, the word is that Mexico could be the key to America's energy future.

Carter is not the only one to hold these sentiments. Key members of Congress—Senators Cranston, Church and Javits, among others—favor doing good neighbor deeds for the Mexicans, hoping that the U.S. might gain access to the huge quantities of oil discovered by its secure, stable, friendly neighbor just south of the border and not an ocean, continent, or political quagmire away.

Mexico could become a major issue of the 1980 presidential campaign. Not only is it high on Carter's list; it is also one of the few issues—perhaps the only one—that Jerry Brown and Teddy Kennedy agree on. Brown wants to establish a North American common market with Mexico and Canada as U.S. partners against the perfidies of OPEC and other world economic blocs. Kennedy announced virtually the same idea in a speech early this year, and last year called for "an effort to establish a policy which favors, if at all possible, Mexican oil over Saudi Arabian oil. . . ." All three men see in Mexico a possible promised land, and doubtless each would like to be the Moses who leads America out of the Egypt of Arab oil to the land of plenty—plenty of oil, that is.

But while Americans aren't happy about the way oil-rich Middle East regimes extract expensive and risky promises from Uncle Sam before they deign to extract oil to sell at increasingly prohibitive prices, there remain good reasons to pause before hopping on the Mexican energy bandwagon.

There's no question that the United States has some hopping to do. Imports, now running to more than 10 million barrels a day, constitute 46 percent of daily U.S. consumption. Of that amount, 85 percent arrives stateside from OPEC points of origin, almost half of that from Arab embargo partners Saudi Arabia, Libya, Algeria and the United Arab Emirates. Recent events—in Iran, where oil exports at one time ceased altogether and where a hostile regime deliberates over who will be allowed to buy what amounts of oil; last December's 14.5 percent OPEC price hike combined with the recent 9 percent increase; the persistent threats of another oil shut-off in response to America's peacemaking role in the Middle East—all have made it painfully clear that the U.S. oil connection is in need of a new socket. Enter Mexico.

CERTAINLY the oil is there. Recent discoveries have pushed estimates of known reserves to more than 60 billion barrels, and the count on potential reserves is now well over 200 billion barrels, with some experts predicting up to twice that amount. That easily puts Mexico in the same league as Saudi Arabia, which has known and potential reserves of between 150 and 200 billion barrels.

U.S. petroleum experts predict that, with modern production technologies, Mexico could extract as much as five or even seven million barrels daily by the mid-1980s, totals now exceeded only by the Soviets, the United States and Saudi Arabia. A secret CIA study last year concluded that Mexico could produce ten million barrels a day by the end of the next decade, equal to the Saudi's present production. But politics, not technology, will determine how much oil Mexico produces. And indications are that it will be much less than the U.S. needs for relief from the energy crunch.

Like the Saudis and the Khomeini regime in Iran, Mexicans have come to question the logic of full-scale oil exploitation. There is widespread debate in Mexico—among intellectuals, labor leaders and in the state bureaucracy—about whether oil left in the ground may be worth more tomorrow than oil pumped and sold to profligate Western nations is today. Some officials of Mexico's national oil company, Pemex, with support from members of the government, argue the opposite. Only through accelerated development utilizing oil revenues, they insist, can Mexico come to grips with its major problems of lagging economic growth, extensive international indebtedness and a rapidly expanding population for which it can provide neither sufficient jobs nor food.

But opponents of oil development are quick to chastise

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Pemex experts for "thinking in English," and label rapid exploitation a sell-out to U.S. interests. A former Pemex director, Antonio Bermudez, has warned that Mexico "not destine its reserves for the progress of other countries, sacrificing the progress of Mexico," and Mexican President Jose Lopez Portillo pointedly declared recently that his country is not at the beck and call of other nations' energy needs, and will "produce fuels for domestic consumption and exports in the quantity and time frame most convenient to us."

The Mexican government has responded to the debate by announcing a compromise development plan which calls for daily production by 1982 of 2.2 million barrels of oil—a one-million barrel increase over present levels—with 1.1 million barrels slated for export. This conservative compromise, while it may help Lopez Portillo temper the opposition, hardly serves to ease things for the U.S., which won't gain access to those 1.1 million barrels either now or in the near future.

While Mexico now sends nearly 90 percent of its export oil to the U.S., that is due to change. Much as the United States wants to diversify its petroleum supply sources, so Mexico plans to expand its markets. Lopez Portillo has made diversification a major policy objective, and his government is moving quickly to cement deals with other countries. France, Israel and Japan have already concluded agreements for substantial oil deliveries, and Philippino, Eastern Bloc and other West European interests are waiting in the wings. Mexican officials have even discussed with the Soviets an arrangement to fulfill Cuba's oil requirements in exchange for the Soviets' supplying Spain. Add up all the promises and contracts and subtract from a pie with only 1.1 million barrels, and what is left is a very small slice for the U.S.

SO THE United States isn't going to get much oil from Mexico, both because there isn't that much to get, and because Mexico has decided to slice the pie differently. Even if the U.S. could get it all, however, chances are it would have only a marginal effect on the situation, for three reasons. First, if Iran cannot or will not boost production to former levels, then much of Mexico's additional supplies would simply go to replace the shortfall, leaving no net supply gain. Second, when Mexican oil becomes available, OPEC members, led by Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, will likely drop their production levels to maintain present supply/demand ratios. The result?—The same amount of world oil supplies available at the same high prices. Finally, America's appetite for oil is growing, with daily consumption now over 20 million barrels and no coherent energy policy to limit it. Clearly, an additional 1.1 million barrels daily, and that not until 1982, does little to solve America's energy dilemma, no matter what the point of origin.

Some U.S. policymakers readily admit that Mexican oil, to be of value to the United States, must be produced in much greater quantities, at least two or three times present Mexican production goals. Problem is, there is very little the U.S. can do to speed up Mexican production.

Granted, Jimmy Carter has a lot of strings he can pull. He can argue persuasively that whatever adversely effects the U.S. economy will visit Mexican commerce as well because, to a large extent, the United States *is* Mexico's economy. He could point out that two-thirds of Mexico's exports are earmarked for U.S. destinations, and that three-fifths of its imports have "made in USA" stamped on them. Carter could refer to the more than two billion dollars in direct foreign investment by American business. He could talk about the billions of dollars sent home to family and relatives by millions of Mexican illegals working north of the border, or of the billions American tourists spend playing south of it.

Big strings could be pulled, but they quite predictably would have the wrong effect, poisoning the already tense relations between the two countries. However Lopez Portillo might want to deal with the United States, his options are limited by the fierce nationalism that infests the production and sale of oil in Mexico. Since 1938, when Mexico became the first country in the world to expropriate foreign corporate holdings and nationalize oil production, Mexicans have turned a suspicious eye on foreign interests. Feeling runs high against any foreign involvement in the country's oil operations, and any attempt to "make a deal" with the United States—particularly an increased-production or lower-than-world-market-price deal—would smack of capitulation to "gringo interests." No Mexican politician can survive such a label.

Nor would the Mexican government risk a move that could break the back of OPEC and bring an end to what since 1974 has been essentially a sellers' market. Mexican oil prices today are among the world's highest, and Lopez Portillo plans to keep them there. In recent discussions with the Japanese, who complained about the price of Mexican oil, he responded tartly that "Mexico highly respects the spirit of OPEC and won't lower its prices to compete with OPEC." Now that Mexico is about to reap the considerable dividends of cartel-created market conditions, he is not about to risk rocking the OPEC boat.

Mexico's militant stand on oil prices illustrates yet another shortcoming of an envisioned U.S.-Mexico oil connection. Even if Mexico produced enough oil to free the United States from dependence on the Middle East, the price per barrel of petroleum—less shipping costs—would remain approximately the same. And the U.S. would still have to pay cash on the barrel for it. Whether dollars find their way into Mexican or Saudi Arabian coffers is inconsequential to economists computing trade deficit figures, or to foreign governments, international bankers, or currency traders worried by the increasing U.S. imbalance. What does matter is that U.S. dollars would continue to flow out of the country in enormous numbers, leaving inflation and a devalued currency in their wake. Mexican oil may offer the U.S. important national security advantages, but it is no solvent for the country's economic woes.

Dependence on foreign oil sources has placed the United States in a precarious position. Switching dependencies, like going from heroin to methadone, may have some salutary effects. But the U.S. needs to kick the habit altogether, and neither Mexico nor any other country beyond its borders can provide the cure.

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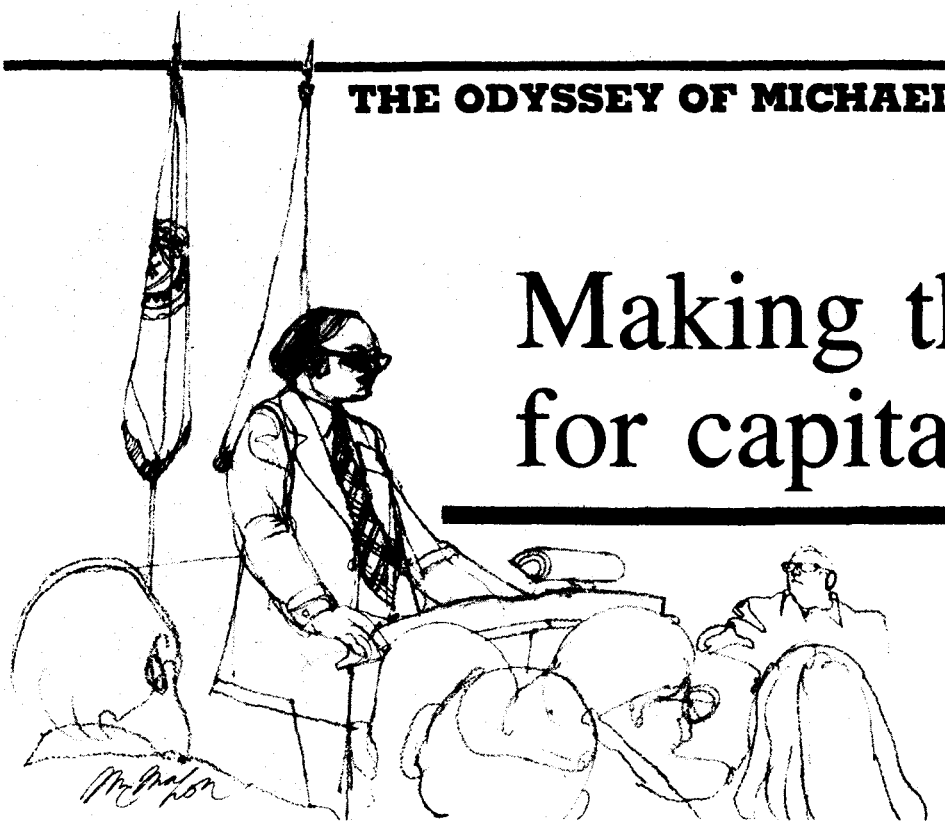
THE ODYSSEY OF MICHAEL NOVAK

Making the case for capitalism



JOSEPH L. WALSH

THE IRREPRESSIBLE Michael Novak continues his odyssey through America's social institutions, an odyssey chronicled in two recent works, *An American Vision* and *The Guns of Lattimer*. Strikingly different in content and tone, these two publications—the former a paean to American capitalism; the latter a documentary account of one of its most brutal labor massacres—provide an occasion for exploring the inner logic in the work of this theologian-philosopher, political activist and social critic.

There are many former admirers of Michael Novak who no longer take him seriously precisely because they discern no connection between his earlier social, political and religious criticism and his recent rightward turn; they believe him guided only by his impulses or by a need for newer and larger audiences. Others continue to hope that Novak's early promise might yet mature into an integrated moral synthesis of his East-European ethnic-Catholic experience, his Lonergan-trained intelligence and political engagement. Both groups ought to look closely at the latest stage in his odyssey—his emergence as champion of the moral superiority of American capitalism.

The Guns of Lattimer (Basic Books, $10.95, 276 pp.) is Novak at what he has come to do best: articulating the experience and aspirations of segments of American society not adequately noticed in American intellectual life. Here he depicts the struggle of immigrant Slavic and Italian coal miners during the 1890's for a modicum of economic justice. In particular it is the story of the killing and wounding in 1897 of 68 peaceful demonstrators in the village of Lattimer Mines near Hazleton, Pa. by "respectable" English-speaking citizens who were subsequently exonerated by judge and jury of similar background.

Novak tells the story in a straightforward, narrative-documentary fashion, relying on contemporary newspaper accounts and some subsequent historical reconstruction for detail and verisimilitude. He reserves his interpretation for a brief epilogue, artfully allowing the story to tell itself and powerfully communicating the dignity of the miners and their families in the face of degrading conditions and the economic, political and police powers aligned against them.

There are some minor flaws in the story-telling, notably the attempt to personalize the story by interjecting the romances of a fictionalized character who resembles Novak's Slovak grandfather. (Readers of Novak's two published early novels will recognize the awkwardness here.) But this is a minor blemish which does not interfere with Novak's ability to convey the victims' world, generally forgotten today even in those same coal fields whose slag heaps are criss-crossed by interstate highways and whose citizens are as secure, or insecure, as the American working class generally.

Novak's brief closing commentary is far less satisfactory, however. Here he interprets the massacre and its aftermath almost solely in ethnic or racial terms: English-speaking citizens conditioned by fear and cultural distance to regard immigrants as dangerous foreigners threatening to take away their jobs and overwhelm their cultural mores and folkways. Violent confrontation was perhaps inevitable, if not necessary, Novak suggests, in order to exorcise these fears and allow for the eventual assimilation of the immigrants.

An interpretation of this kind is belied by Novak's own documentation. One hundred of Hazelton's business and professional men did not band together as a sheriff's posse out of race hatred or on their own initiative. The coal-mine operators hired them in order to break an effective strike; and bought

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them their guns; paid for their legal defense; and manipulated the prosecutor's indictment so that no responsible jury, whatever its ethnic makeup, could hold a whole posse responsible for the murder of any given victim. No doubt the triggers were pulled at Lattimer by people inflamed by ethnic antagonism. But the citizen-deputies were in place not as a chorus in an American-ethnic Greek tragedy as Novak suggests, but because the economic power on which their comfort and status depended paid them to crush the miners' new-found strength. The drive of the economically privileged to maintain their wealth and power, capitalizing on ethnic antagonism where available, has much more to say about the meaning of the Lattimer massacre than Novak allows, as it does of roughly contemporary events in Ludlow, Colorado; Wyoming; Homestead, Pennsylvania; Montana and elsewhere (the grandfather of former Governor Scranton of Pennsylvania led a similiar posse in Scranton in 1877).

WHY Novak should divert attention from economics to ethnicity becomes clear when we turn to *An American Vision* (American Enterprise Institute, $2.75). A brief work, intended as a summary of the moral value of American capitalism and as a plan of counter-attack for its supposedly beleaguered leaders, *Vision* might not merit careful scrutiny were it not for the importance of the issues it raises and for the illustration it provides of Novak's difficulty in establishing himself a a commentator of substance on American politics. *An American Vision* tells a very different story from *Lattimer*. Here Novak writes a kind of contemporary morality play in which "our system"—whose democratic political and cultural values are dependent on capitalism—is being assaulted by a new class of adversary intellectuals. Enjoying ready access to the media, these intellectuals seek to chain the hands of "our system" with excessive rules and regulations. The business class, "which traditionally abhors conflict" and has previously been able to "concentrate its efforts rather narrowly on its own products and their benefits to consumers" because it commanded broad public support, can no longer sit back in gentlemanly fashion. Just as it previously hired economists, psychologists and artists to sell its products, it must now subsidize its own think-tanks and enlist on-leave academics and unemployed Ph.D's in a "war of ideas" to tell its story to the public. Novak is quite explicit about what he means by the "war of ideas." Its purpose is not to educate citizens on the issues. "Education is too diffuse and unspecific. It differs from catechetical instruction; it opens up arguments and debates. . . . It consists neither in indoctrination nor in the transmission of propaganda."

Just as "left-wing" organizations, "public-interest groups" and "activists" have used the media to bypass the democratic process, so too the business class must now learn the same game of political manipulation. The "activists" have wrapped themselves in a mantle of smug righteousness on issues like pollution, health and safety; they state issues with dramatic appeal to the news media and have played upon the deep moral concern of the American people. Now "the business class" should respond in kind, exposing the moral weakness implied in the comfortable life style of the activists, stressing the economic costs involved in the policies they advocate, and, in general, extolling the cultural and humanistic achievements of democratic capitalism.

Contrary to its critics' assertions, our system is not primarily characterized by selfishness and a competitive "rat race." Our culture nourished teamwork and associational activity. "Forming a committee" is our favorite national pastime. Fraternal rather than paternal exercises of authority are characteristic. Our system is also marked by a high degree of upward and downward mobility, and although there are some "remaining pockets" of the needy, still in the "lottery of life" "everyone is equal" except in "good luck and bad luck." Admittedly the marketplace sometimes produces "serious inequalities" but correcting these with "central planning" would undermine the economic basis of our political values: "strong central planning, backed up by agencies of enforcement cannot be democratic." The socialist alternative, whatever its theoretical attractions, has proven itself unworkable and undesirable in practice.

WHAT ARE WE to make of this tale of capitalism's woes? Is it only a piece of political pamphleteering? Certainly Novak's forays into price economics and American economic history cannot be taken seriously. In defending oil company pricing, for instance, he urges us to remember that "it is difficult to find a gallon of anything in a supermarket that costs as little as a gallon of gas." "A gallon of milk costs $1.49 . . . ginger ale $1.98." One is tempted to ask how many gallons of ginger ale one needs to commute to work or, for that matter, to transport goods like milk and soft drinks to the supermarket. In fact, the whole exercise is naive and irrelevant—Novak could have looked at Kool-Aid (much cheaper) or perfume (many times as expensive) just as well.

Nor can one seriously contend that the American business class has traditionally abhorred conflict and contented itself with making good products while supported by a friendly climate of ideas. As Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. reminds us in *The Age of Jackson* American history has always been characterized by the struggle of democracy to limit the power of the business class. And the business class has always fought back as violently as it has needed to—witness Lattimer, Ludlow, and the 1935 Ford attack on strikers at the Dearborn overpass. The business class fought unionization with guns, intimidation, infiltration and media propaganda at every step of the way, quite consciously at war with a large part of the climate of ideas.

The recent defeat of the new labor relations act indicates that the struggle continues. The national consensus Novak refers to existed if at all only in the 1950s and early '60s. Even then it was the vast growth of the American economic pie, fueled by the dominant position of America in the world economy, the rebuilding of Europe and Japan and the artificially low price of imported oil and gasoline, that made business-labor negotiations more amicable.

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IN SPITE OF distortions like these, *An American Vision* is not without some critical and ethical perspective. Novak posits a set of traditional moral American values that he sees the business class itself inadvertently undermining. TV commercials produced by ad-agency "swingers" glorify instant gratification; do such people really work for the capitalist or the adversarial class? (One wonders what conglomerate manufacturers of musk oil and presto cookers will think about this interpretation of their best interests. More important is the possibility, which Novak ignores, that this assault on stable morality is central rather than peripheral to the capitalist dynamic.)

Novak in fact appears to be less interested in the merits of the business case than he is continuing his attack on moralistic intellectuals. Novak's passionate opposition to U.S. involvement in the Vietnam war and his celebration of ethnicity vs "liberal homogenization" in *The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics* always have as their prime targets America's "brightest and best," who, in Novak's view, pursued their elitist values at the expense of others' (Vietnamese and ethnic) culture. Novak now perceives these same people, or at least their younger cousins, using environmental and safety concerns as their vehicle to power while ignoring the real world of costs and constraints that the businessman and the average worker inhabit. The connecting thread of Novak's social analysis has been the myths, folkways and rituals of American culture too long passed over by intellectualist social planners and idealists. His lyrical analysis of American popular culture, *Joy of Sport*, and of presidential politics, *Choosing Our King*, both pointed towards the unconscious ritualistic and symbolic elements in American life.

In *The Experience of Nothingness* (1970) Novak laid down the basis of his ethics when, interpreting Aristotle, he urged each person "to invent his own identity" by discerning from his "impulses, pleasures, pains, instincts, reactions" the "hidden, inner springs of his own spontaneities." Novak's social ethic is essentially this personal ethic writ large—the evocation of the "hidden, inner springs" of peoples and cultures to serve as guides to national identity and correct moral action. In *An American Vision* Novak sees himself articulating the deep, lived experience of the capitalist and democratic American people against those who would guide American social policy according to abstract norms of progress, equality, or human betterment.

The virtue of *Vision* lies in its insistence that American's critics take greater account of the nation's strengths in devising proposals for substantial change. The value of his social ethic lies in correcting the excesses of American liberalism—its moralism and its self-righteousness, its tendency to run roughshod over the sometimes inchoate responses of those whom it sees as clients, not equals.

On the surface, at least, Novak's philosophy appears compatible with the traditional economic goals of American liberalism. His defense of business interests against the new adversarial class, he argues, is not a matter of conservativism vs. liberalism: at some future time the pendulum, which today has swung too far in a regulatory direction, might need to swing back.

It is at this point, however, that the inadequacies of Novak's social ethic as a political norm become apparent. It contains no criterion for judging the emphasis to be placed on the various components of a people's experience at any given juncture of its history. If the assertion of market-place freedom against government planners and watchdogs is a part of the American experience, so also are the anti-corporate impulses within trade unionism, populism, Progressivism and the New Deal. The American economic system provides economic security today to some organized workers not because it functions, lottery-like, according to imaginary rules of fair play, but because anti-corporate unions and moralistic intellectuals (including some within the business community) fought to make it that way by dint of unrelenting pressure and bitter struggle.

Novak tells us that now the pendulum has swung "too far" in the anti-corporate direction. That may be the case. It may also be the case, however, that corporate forces are simply using the current anxiety generated by the increasing complexity of a technological society to regain the offensive in their continuing struggle for increased freedom. At the least Novak ought to show himself aware of that possibility and even more to articulate the basis on which he judges "too far" or "not enough." There may be some proverbial, intuitive, mythic awareness underlying his judgment which he has yet to make clear. Meanwhile it will appear to many that corporate institutions—that which in the course of one year arrange significant tax-breaks for themselves, keep their martinis' tax deductible and their cotton mills unhealthy—are not in much danger of being overregulated.

THE INADEQUACY of Novak's social ethic as a guide to political policy becomes even more apparent when one judges it in the light of broader global and environmental concern. There is a still largely inchoate, through growing, awareness in the American psyche that the cornucopia, like the frontier, is closing; that the sky may indeed be a limit; that regulation and bureaucratization in some form may become as omnipresent on spaceship earth as the oxygen we all inhale.

Fundamental shifts are taking place in the way Americans will use the globe we inhabit with the so-called teeming masses—Iranian, Mexican, Chinese—whom we once ignored or spurned. The shape of these relations is unclear, and no existing ideology—liberalism, conservativisma, socialism, radical democracy—has a monopoly on solutions. But whatever the future, it is clear that the wishes and needs of others will structure everyone's behavior more than ever. Furthermore, with the environmentally-induced shrinking of the economic pie—domestically and internationally—the pressures on wealthy nations and on the wealthy within nations to keep what they have will increase. Sometimes corporate cries for deregulation and increased freedom will be legitimate complaints about bureaucratic insensitivity towards their special needs and problems. In other instances these cries are likely to signal the first painful contractions of the economic-pie and

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corporate determination to lose no part of it to the less well off here or anywhere. At the very least, Novak and the neoconservatives with whom he is presently aligned ought to recognize the difference.

There are times in *An American Vision* when Novak seems to recognize that the conflict he is describing between the business and adversarial classes is not just a matter of "ins" and "outs" in the game of American politics, but of long-range, philosophic importance. "In each generation," Novak says, the "fundamental ideas and symbols of a civilization need to be rethought because of changes in the practical world." "In times of turmoil," radical attacks on the prevailing tradition may be launched, sometimes for good, sometimes for ill, he says, and "such attacks and counter-attacks constitute 'the war of ideas.'"

But Novak now makes a surprising move. Where we expect at least some attempt to formulate a standard for distinguishing which of the radical ideas, not to speak of the counter-attacks, are legitimate and by what criteria, at precisely this point in his discussion we get exhortations about the value of propaganda, over the slower, clumsier methods of education, argument and debate.

THERE IS no doubt in my mind that Novak is carried away here and does not mean to advocate indoctrination by the business class uncritically. Nonetheless it is typical of the rhetorical excess that abounds in *Vision* and in some of his recent journalism. The issues he raises are indeed momentous. Samuel Huntington and Zbigniew Brezinski, neoconservatives in the Carter administration who were formerly affilaited with the corporate financed Trilateral Commission, have both hinted that less rather than more democracy might be necessry to insure social stability in the years ahead. Now that is a radical idea! Yet it is quite in keeping with what one would expect in a contracting world economy where it has been precisely democratic expectations that have limited corporate freedom. Novak, at least in *Vision*, shows no taste for reflecting on such aspects of "times of turmoil." Instead he simply declares himself a combatant on the corporate side of "the war of ideas" and ignores any responsibility for formulating standards that might apply to all.

Fortunately there is no reason to assume that this partisan pamphleteering is Novak's best or final word on the conflict of ideas shaping up in American culture. In a recent *Commentary* symposium on whether socialism or only capitalism is compatible with democracy Novak took a more thoughtful stand. "Social theory that is merely capitalist or merely socialist is tired," says Novak. "A merely socialist or capitalist way of thinking feels like a str...jacket." Here Novak appears to be reaching beyoind polemics for a critical perspective on both the business class and its various adversaries.

Others, like Andrew Greeley, Peter Berger and Richard Neuhaus, who share Novak's distaste for moralistic activists have begun to formulate a social ethics that also attempts to "get beyond" capitalism and socialism. In Greeley's *No Bigger Than Necessary* and in Berger and Neuhaus's *To Empower People: The Role of Mediating Structures in Public Policy*, they all advocate decentralized societies that limit the function of central governmental authority while imposing, at least implicitly, limits on the activity of corporate power as well. Taking their work in general these theorists all mistakenly imply that transcendence-starved, utopian dreamers create "big" government, whereas they would do well to give more attention to the needs of corporate capital for transportation, information, capital accumulation and secure overseas investments as the more fundamental causes. Nonetheless, they are on the right track in seeking to formulate a social norm that binds capitalists as well as their critics. If Novak is going to deal with the large issues of social change addressed in *Vision* he has to raise his powerful intuitive gifts to some comparable level of ethical judgment. The time has come for him to be much clearer about the standards he uses to separate good from bad in the "war of ideas" and to judge whether a society has moved "too far" in one direction or another. To do so he may have to return to perennial questions about proper social ends, individual claims and responsibilities, and active participation in public life. Only then, however, will he be able to illuminate, and not just be carried along by, the turbulence he correctly perceives.

Screen

BOO HOO FOR HOLLYWOOD

STUDIO STUDIES, PART TWO

IN MY LAST column I was explaining why I thought some of the filmmaking done at RKO in the decade after World War II, and seen again this spring in a retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art, represents the very best in American movies. The films that seem so strong now are the ones we might least expect to: the low-budget thrillers, private-eye films and psycho-dramas, those routine studio products of the day which the French call *le film noir*. These films have the tightest plots, the neatest twists, the snappiest dialogue and the snazziest style of any that were made in Hollywood. Their style is a naturalized version of German Expressionism. It relies upon heavy shadows, manipulated lighting, baroque action, flamboyant visual effects and other production values that had immigrated to America primarily from the German films of the twenties. But instead of creating the world of fantasy and mythology that it had in Germany, this style was here used to transform the objective world of everyday reality into a compelling nightmare.

I suspect that the film which made the development of this new style possible is the one that is now usually acknowledged to be *the* American classic, *Citizen Kane*, which was made at RKO in 1941. I'm not talking only about *Kane*'s stylistic innovations, though they are of course crucial and contributed

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a good deal to *film noir*. But equally important was the precedent Orson Welles set by his intentions for the film. With his Mercury Players, Welles came to the West Coast as a whiz kid from the East who intended to take Hollywood by storm. And it was the Hollywood community to which *Kane* was pitched, not America at large. Welles wanted to dazzle the film colony with his intuitive skill. He wanted to make a movie that would impress the pros, would knock their eyes out, even if the hicks from the sticks didn't get it. The fact is that the general public didn't get it, either, for despite the hoopla surrounding *Kane* it was rather disappointing at the box office. But Hollywood was indeed dazzled by the film just as Welles had hoped it would be, and every young director coming up through the ranks in the next few years wanted to imitate *Kane*'s success. They wanted to imitate not only its style, but its strategy for success—its appeal to one's Hollywood peers rather than the American public as a whole.

Following Welles's precedent in this regard actually made some sense in postwar Hollywood. In those days America still went to the movies twice a week no matter what was playing. Paid admissions were near their all-time peak and higher than they would be again for twenty years. To exploit this seemingly endless demand for movies, the suppliers, which is to say the studios, had developed a system called "block booking." It forced theater owners to rent films in large packages, committing themselves to a dozen or more in order to get the one or two they really wanted. The anti-trust suit which would divorce MGM from the Loew's theater chain, and put an end to all block booking, was still several years away, as was the impact of television. Since they would give both audiences and theater owners more options, these later developments would reduce the number of films made each year and make the studios court the public's favor more ardently. But for the time being the audience was, up to a point, taken for granted. Talented young filmmakers had to be brought along every year because of the large number of films needed to meet demand; yet below a certain level the system didn't expect the audience to distinguish one filmmaker's work from another's.

In other words, a young filmmaker had little opportunity to get credit for pleasing the public. The system was set up so that below a certain level it didn't register whether the public was pleased or not. Under these circumstances it made more sense to try to impress other Hollywood professionals. You had a greater chance of getting some feedback from them, and of advancing your career if you were admired. This psychology must have been particularly appealing at RKO, which made an inordinate number of routine pictures—the sort of pictures that not only seemed unexceptional in box office reports, but went largely unnoticed by critics and even studio executives. When RKO was making a major production like Victor Fleming's *Joan of Arc* (1948) with Ingrid Bergman, the management undoubtedly kept tight control. It's such a birthday cake of a film, you can just tell the front office supplied both the recipe and the ingredients. But because of the constant shake-ups in studio management, crews and casts on RKO's many B pictures were probably less supervised than elsewhere. They were relatively free to make their films to suit themselves. If a filmmaker became more prominent later, he would be more directly accountable for the profit or loss of his movies. He would have to tone down his work to insure the mass appeal necessary for a return on a larger investment. But in order to earn such dubious opportunities, he first had to knock somebody's eye out.

I think that this historical paradox explains the career of a filmmaker like Robert Wise. Although eventually the director of such schlock spectaculars as *West Side Story, The Sound of Music* (both of which won Academy Awards) and the movie version of *Star Trek*, which he currently has in production, Wise began his career by directing nine films at RKO in six years, 1943-1949. This apprenticeship in film direction was his reward for having been, after starting as a porter at RKO in 1933, the editor on *Citizen Kane*. And among those initial films are the two or three best that Wise ever made: *Born to Kill* (1947), *Blood on the Moon* (1948) and *The Set Up* (1949).

In *Born to Kill*, where a well-connected divorcee (Claire Trevor) falls for a gigolo (Lawrence Tierney) because she shares his love of violence, the sheer perversity of the film is refreshing. The mood is set when Trevor discovers a double murder in a friend's kitchen at night. She pushes aside the body curled against the door with about as much emotion as an ocean liner shows scraping past an iceberg in the fog. In the Western *Blood on the Moon*, Wise introduced the same atmosphere into a saloon fight. Perhaps the most distinctive moment in these films, though, is the one in *The Set Up* where a tanktown fighter (Robert Ryan) tries to escape from some hoodlums. In a deserted arena he flees down a side aisle whose darkness literally swallows him whole. The camera dollies forward just slightly as if peering into the darkness, but afraid to enter. Then we hear the frantic rattling of a barred door, and in a second Ryan bobs up out of the darkness again like a swimmer who's had to come up too fast from deep water.

Film noir became a language that Hollywood filmmakers developed just to communicate with each other. It was a shared style much as Abstract Expressionism then was among painters in New York. The paradox of the factory method by which Hollywood made films is that it ultimately allowed art to creep in in this way—through the chinks which Hollywood's own, burgeoning success created in the studio system. Isolated from their audience by the system itself, filmmakers began to become somewhat alienated from the audience as well. They began to follow the pattern that had set in in other modern arts. But while this sort of thing might be all right for painters in Greenwich Village or Woodstock, the movie colony couldn't function as an art colony. *Film noir* was the one movie genre attractive to highbrows like Clifford Odets and Harold Clurman, who together made *Deadline at Dawn*, Clurman's only try at directing, at RKO in 1946. Similar B pictures inspired French aesthetes like Jean-Luc Godard. Fifteen years later the New Wave was imitating the old Hollywood style of the postwar era. But the American public was no doubt less enthusiastic.

It is only in retrospect, after twenty-five years of the

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mediocrity of television, that we see without reservation how well made and entertaining these films were. At the time, their over-ripe ironies and high stylization must have seemed disconcerting. In fact, these wonderful films almost certainly added to the demise of the studio system that had made them possible. It turns out that Orson Welles really was setting the precedent in more ways than anyone realized. While Robert Wise has gone on to a long, distinguished and dull career in Hollywood, Welles's career has been an anticlimax. He has gotten into difficulties, failed to come up with the backing necessary to realize his projects, and been generally underemployed. It is in Welles's career, rather than Wise's, that the true history of Hollywood is written. *(The second of two parts)*

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

Dance

BEJART & BALLET

NOVELTY UPON NOVELTY

MAURICE BEJART, artistic director of the Ballet of The 20th Century, is obsessed with re-interpreting ballet history. He adores updating classic productions to make them "relevant" in contemporary terms. His infatuation, however, extends to concepts rather than dance steps, so despite his works' high theatricality, they have curiously little identity in the sense of a personal movement signature.

His florid imagination is occupied almost totally with presentation rather than with the core matter of ballet which is the deployment of the classic vocabulary in fresh, inventive combinations. The flagrant extravagance of the resultant ballets essentially represents a fustian development of the less appealing phase of Serge Diaghilev's "Ballets Russes" companies. The works derive inspiration from that latter period of the Diaghilev company's existence when decoration replaced dancing as the most compelling visual on stage and the desired balance between choreography, music and decor was seriously tipped in favor of painterly display.

The Ballet of the 20th Century is resident in Brussels and has been making regular appearances in New York since 1971. In sheer numbers, nearly eighty dancers, the company has major size and in Europe has a major reputation. (My publisher once told me that the inclusion of a chapter on Béjart would insure publication of the title in France.) Its leading dancers, past and present, have tended to be men possessed of idiosyncratic performing skills that lie somewhere between classic ballet and modern dance. Considering the stress laid on presentational ingenuity, it is no surprise that the company does not mount any classic ballet in classic style but exhibits them as contemporary fables requiring the interpretative skills of these strangely gifted dancers.

Currently occupying the top rank among the men are Jorge Donn, Victor Ullate, Daniel Lommel and Patrice Touron, all of whom were seen in works specially tailored for them. Mr. Donn was highly visible throughout the season in "Petrouchka" and "Amor di Poeta" which ransacked the ballet attic assiduously if not tastefully. The former was one of the landmark collaborations of Diaghilev's "Ballets Russes," recounting a fable of human dignity through the characters in a puppet show. Béjart has retained Stravinsky's score but otherwise altered the ballet to present a man's search for identity in the sideshow atmoshphere of a mirrored fun house.

The hero tried on different masks during his struggle to find himself but one came away more with the sense of violation that attends a wrong-headed re-interpretation of a standard work than with an expanded appreciation of its wider applicability. "Poeta" was an original conception, blending symbolic figures and quotes from other choreographers' ballets, notably George Balanchine's "Four Temperaments," in an improbable brew of allegorical meaning. The poet had to identify and justify his calling through what became a maelstrom of catch-all effects, including a threatening cat, gluttonous people who devoured a real cake and a brace of football players.

Surrealism's suspension of everyday logic in favor of dream imagery was in full flower during Béjart's young adulthood in the '30s and '40s and made an indelible impression on him. As Diaghilev used the pictorial innovations of the advanced artists of his day—pre- and post- W.W.I—Béjart favors the oblique bombast of surrealism which succeeded them. His "Gaité Parisienne" is the most fevered of the current ballets using the methodology.

Leonid Massine, who choreographed the original, shaped it around the antics of an enormously wealthy Peruvian who traveled to Paris for a flirtatious and fun-filled outing. It was delightfully empty-headed but tightly controlled so as not to outstay its lightweight welcome. Béjart has introduced the "awakening" plot of "The Sleeping Beauty" and has presented the ballet as the odyssey of a contemporary young man, a dancer, coming to Paris to perfect his art.

Mr. Ullate, the hero, it must be said, is extraordinarily accomplished technically, in a ballet that is a pretentious jumble of effects. References to the student uprisings of the '60s mingle with straight dance class episodes and characters from French cultural history. Offenbach himself functions as "The Lilac (good) Friday" encouraging the young man, and "Madame," alias the wicked witch Carabosse, cackles and tells him he has no talent and will never amount to anything. Presumably, Béjart had such a teacher at one point in his career and is now exorcising old demons.

The fusion of the two ballets is an ingenious intellectual feat and it is amusing to follow the parallels, such as solos by a string of young men around a crib, from which Mr. Ullate first emerges, that suggest the gift-bearing solos at the start of "Beauty." For no particular reason Mr. Lommel and Katalin Csarnoy danced a decorative but accomplished duet in the midst of this cavalcade of French cultural history.

Ultimately, however, the ballet works far better in the mind

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as a puzzle teaser than it does on stage where the empty parade of incidents is not brightened by choreographic invention. Novelty follows novelty inexorably, including the intrusive partnering attempts of the gentlemen subscribers of the Jockey Club, that gave the old Paris Opera the reputation of a rich man's playground rather than an edifice of high art.

As "Petrouchka" was transformed into a cartoon of the original so "Spectre de la rose," another of Nijinsky's key roles, was finessed into a cocktail party irrelevancy. A smartly dressed young woman, Judith Jameson, is surprised by a man, Mr. Touron, and in turn surprises him by revealing herself in an identical flower costume. Instead of being abandoned by a dream figure as in the original, she leaves him for a reversal that has a soupçon of shock value but little else.

The most moving of the works presented during the season brought Jean Babilée back to a New York stage after an absence of nearly thirty years. "Life" was a duet contrasting his measured and mature acrobatic strength and Catherine Dethy's fluid young dancer's movement. In her he rediscovers his own youthful dedication and they dash off impetuously after having been cast as natural antagonists by the chasm of age. Babilée looked absolutely splendid, clambering about and through a large pipe frame and Miss Dethy was innocently extravagant in her suppleness. The work had movement invention, restraint and a spareness in decor; one prop and a few simple black curtains. Its austerity tended to make the rest of the season vapid by comparison.

DON McDONAGH

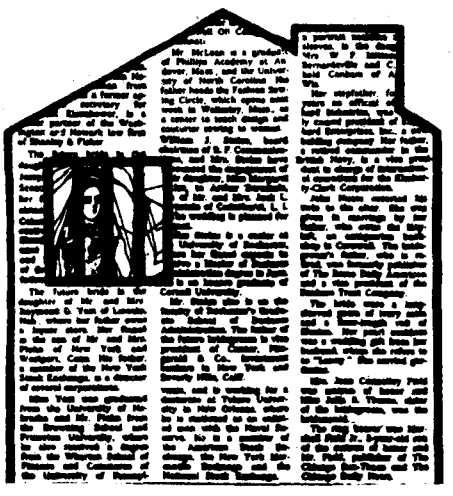
THE LIFE AND DEATH OF TANIA

Psyching Patty

SAUL MALOFF

SAY, FOR THE SAKE of placing her in the landscape of American radical history loosely conceived, she came from her home in Des Moines or Omaha in the early 1930s, a recent graduate of an expensive boarding school and, following her social debut (about which she had some misgivings but nevertheless gracefully endured for her parents' sake and in order to avoid a forest of raised eyebows) and a summer of parties, all of them the same and all deathly wearying, and awkward boys distinguishable one from another only by name—following her season went to Vassar, say, or Radcliffe. Mother is active in the Junior League and the more appealing charities; Dad is a meat-packing mogul or banker or really big in insurance; their daughter's life is remarkable in that nothing has ever happened to her. Nothing. Ever.

At college she hears about the Nazis and the Rhineland, or about Franco and Spain, or about many millions of unemployed and literal starvation—about foreclosures in the countryside near Des Moines and Omaha and armed farmers manning their property line against the marshals, and meaning business. Later, in New York or Boston, where she has gone to find suitably interesting work, she notices, as she noticed at college, that the brightest, liveliest, most interesting and intense people are boycotting Japanese goods or collecting money for the Spanish Loyalists or talking union (or tirelessly "explaining" the Moscow Trials to unbelievers). Many of them are attractive, passionate people, burning with a holy fire—for ideas, for justice, for art; nothing like the husks back home; and she knows she was meant for better things than tea dances and a perfect house in the perfect suburb. It is as if she was a void waiting to be filled; compared with



her new friends, her old ones seem inanimate as stone.

Soon, she is doing as they do—circulating petitions, attending endless meetings, rallies, demonstrations, collecting funds; and experiencing an excitement she'd not believed possible. At last she has entered History, is marvelously alive and fully living the life of her time. She matters; people solicit her opinion and take it seriously.

By now her parents would hardly recognize her: no makeup or other vanities—well, perhaps just a touch; her hair worn severely no-nonsense—a manner that becomes her charmingly; her dress in the going style of what might be called chic lumpen proletarian enlivened perhaps by an imaginative splash here and there, costly relics of a past never entirely foresworn. There are the obligatory affairs of the period—a longshoreman, a trade union organizer, a poet she met at a fundraising party who instead of actually going to Spain with the Lincoln Brigade, as he'd seriously considered doing, decided to make of his art a weapon and drive it into the throat of the Fascist beast.

And then it was all over. The War, the end of the Depression, first armed truce and then reconciliation with her family, a new job, the discovery that things are not

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so bad after all, a quickened taste for the comfies and goodies of life after long deprivation, an altered perspective amounting to a sudden flash of insight by which the wayward follies of youth are seen from the towering eminence of a new maturity. She must have been possessed, she feels, assisted by time, distance, a new life. Looking back, she hardly recognizes the girl she was. *She* didn't do those things; some others she did—a troubled, confused kid caught up in the frenzies of turbulent times, her head stuffed with ideas acquired at that college, from those erstwhile friends and teachers who somehow managed to make reference to Franco and Hitler and the Soviet Union in the midst of lectures on Beowulf and Anglo-Saxon prosody, Cromwell and the Rump Parliament. Her husband, a rising young man in banking or insurance, thinks she broods too much and urges her to become active in polite civic affairs and the right charities. In 1950, give or take a year or two, she writes a letter, marked CONFIDENTIAL, to the FBI, saying she herself was never a member of *anything*, despite what they may have heard, though she knows some people who were, or probably were, or who knew people who were, listed below. (The poet, whose name is listed below, his revolutionary, heaven-storming sonnet-sequence long since abandoned, is now himself a rising man in real estate.) When two men visit her house in the suburbs, she provides further information, far more than she knows. At intervals longer and longer, even to this day, she recalls, generally on long rainy Sunday afternoons, the wild girl who burned with ardor and might have gone to Spain as a nurse or ambulance-driver had the Republic not just then fallen, and for a fleeting moment she still feels something like awe, through a haze of cocktails.

Patty Hearst, one of the defense psychiatrists told Shana Alexander after the girl had been tried and convicted of *voluntarily* taking part in the Hibernia bank robbery as the gun-brandishing world-famous Tania, "was a goddam blob": that's what was left of her when the play ended, the role discarded and she was secure in her prison cell and back in the real world of her parents, her sisters, the egregious F. Lee Bailey, her best friend Trish Tobin, daughter of Hibernia's president, the girl whose recorded conversation during a prison visit helped convict Patty. That was the famous conversation in which Patty-Tania was still coming on strong, as someone the pigs had better not mess with, telling her dazzled friend that she was plenty "pissed-off" at being arrested (a curious metaphor considering that she in literal truth had wet her drawers when the FBI hero leveled his gun at her) and that she saw the world from a "revolutionary feminist perspective" and didn't care who knew it. That was the girl who saluted the Six O'Clock News with a raised fist and upon being booked gave her occupation as "urban guerrilla," a nice, pedantic distinction. At the moment she didn't appear to know who or what else she might be; and that, at least, was something.

Then, as suddenly as she had metamorphosed from William Randolph Hearst's granddaughter into the bewigged terrorist, she was back again. How could it be otherwise? Playtime was over; the real world wore a grim aspect. No more fooling around, her lawyers told her. Al Johnson, Bailey's co-counsel, presided, Shana Alexander tells us, over the demise of Tania. If she had it in her head, he told her, to jump up and down in the courtroom and shout slogans, she had better get herself another boy. Tania was dead, as if she'd never been; Patty Hearst was their only client, a girl who could have been anybody's daughter, except that she happened to be Randolph Hearst's daughter. Now you just listen to this, they as good as told her, and listen good. You were kidnapped, brutally; thrown into one closet and then another; treated bestially; raped, threatened repeatedly with grave bodily harm and death, forced to speak those tapes and finally to emerge as Tania at the Hibernia under the duress of the gun—one false move and that was it, you won't have a chance to make another.

Mel's Sporting Goods store? Pure reflex—you were a trained soldier at combat readiness; you didn't think, you *acted*, as good soldiers do. The statements you made to the Matthews boy when you and the Harrises commandeered his vehicle and held him hostage? Duress again—the Harrises were right there, in spirit if not always in the flesh. Those many long months on the lam following the incineration in Los Angeles? Well, by that time, so terrified were you, you thought the FBI and police would shoot to kill on sight, or the Harrises would get you, or sympathizers of the late Symbionese Liberation Army. Besides, where would you have gone? When she at length appeared in court, wan, sallow, shrunken (she had been menstruating, we learn, almost without letup for a year), though bedizened by pink and perfectly enameled fingernails, she seemed to Shana Alexander a zombie, "dead," or, on closer scrutiny, "embalmed," as if for immortality in Forest Lawn. "Nothing happens in her face," remarked Adela Rogers St. John, the old Hearst columnist. What's truly astonishing is not that the jury refused to believe the defense but that anyone should ever have thought they might.

What's even more astonishing is that so shrewd, experienced, knowing and accomplished a journalist as Shana Alexander should ever have been in doubt, even for a while, during the earlier stages of the trial. Therein, lies both the weakness and the strength of her very thick, richly detailed, lively account of the long ordeal.* Unabashedly sentimental, she is as much interested in the minute turnings of her own feeling and thought, an autobiographical record of her changes and responses as the drama unfolded. In part she is a victim of her hectic appropriation of her subject, more nearly personal identification than detached though sympathetic imagination. For her, it isn't merely an interesting, even an important event; it's the trial of the decade, the century, "*the* news event of my journalistic lifetime," "a metaphor for America," the human condition, a wellspring for (reckless) anthropological speculation out of Fromm and Bachofen and (discredited or at least unsupported and unverifiable) notions of prehistorical

* *Anyone's Daughter:* The Times and Trials of Patty Hearst, by Shana Alexander, Viking, $14.95, 562 pp.

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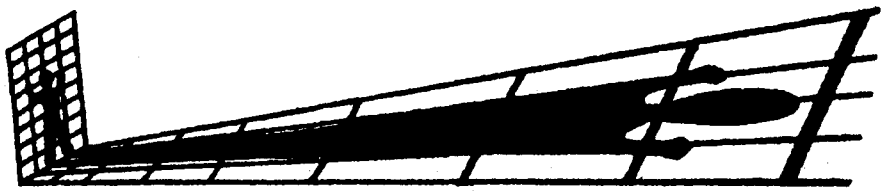
matriarchal society—and all the while curiously void of historical and political texture and analytic penetration.

The key lies here: she was, she writes, "a captive of Patty Hearst and her story . . . I understood her because in some way she was the girl I had been, and in some way I was also her mother. I understand that a mother-daughter struggle was close to the core of her story, something similar to what had happened to me and my mother, and to myself and my own daughter, whom I was losing now." In fact, by one of those freak coincidences, the luck of a writer with a hot hand but something less than that for the unhappy woman, in the midst of the trial Alexander's own deeply troubled daughter (an adopted one, to complicate matters even further, and hovering precariously between her divorced parents) ran away from her New England boarding-school; though apart from the fact that we are given a few fleeting glimpses of Alexander's imperious mother, there is no other significant similarity between that greatly accomplished lady and the lamentable Mrs. Hearst. Alexander knew neither of the Hearst women; she plants the "mother-daughter struggle" in order to find it, and comes up with a thundering truism or platitude, rather like the defense psychiatrists who found exactly the syndrome they were looking for, which happened to be, wonder of wonders, their professional specialties.

Psyching Patty was everybody's business, for years the national pastime, in part, one suspects, because of the grisly fascination and sinister pleasure of watching the mighty fall. The name, of course, was the essential element; without it, Patty might just as well have been Squeaky Fromme, Sara Jane Moore, Camilla Hall, Angela Atwood or any of the other forgotten names. Without it she could have been anyone's daughter—indeed *was* "anyone's daughter," as she (or whoever her SLA ghostwriter might have been) said in the "Tania Interview" that proved to be an important element leading to conviction. Her essential story appears ten thousands times over in the annals in the sixties and seventies of this, or for that matter the last century, in this and a dozen other countries. Only the



name and family fortune distinguish her from the others; nor, come to that, are illustrious (or infamous) names and large fortunes all that uncommon in the history of revolutionary theater (or in that of serious revolutionary movements) which, seen in this perspective, is the family romance writ large.

A less likely candidate for the role of Tania can scarcely be imagined, that's the point about the Tanias and Ulrikas; though after the fact, in a desperate quest for *something*, we're inclined to make much of little or nothing. She had a striking penchant for getting kicked out of schools and once flatly instructed a teacher-nun to go to hell, in so many words. She may have sympathized with the effort of some co-workers to organize a union in a department store and briefly held a job in a nursery for black children. She set out to catch a teacher, and caught him: Stephen Weed, some catch. The idea of marrying him appears to have been Mummy's resolve to make an honest woman of her wanton, "strong-willed" girl; the prospect may have induced her suicidal thoughts, small wonder. Just before the kidnapping she had settled, resentfully, into the housewifely role of cooking for Weed and his friends. All in all, hardly a strenuous life, and little enough to show for nineteen years. More like a void; or, as her principal psychiatric scenarist put it, a "blob."

Enter the SLA, equipped with dashing uniforms, make-believe names, theatrical disguises, a small armory, a striking vocabulary and an incendiary pseudoideology, stitched-together catch-phrases and slogans from here and there and everywhere, perfectly suited to those who would rather scream than think—and above all an irresistible program for crushing the infamy, liberating women, convicts, blacks, the poor and oppressed everywhere, storming the ramparts, routing the pigs in the final conflict and taking State power within the fortnight. Anybody's daughter? My own would have been the first to volunteer save for the fact (I think) that nobody thought to invite her, so instead she went straight, but only very reluctantly and by the crookedest of paths, dismantling ancient institutions as she went.

If Shana Alexander had put in time on the Left—say, at her old school Vassar—she would have known Patty at first sight; and if she had known her she would not have been stunned, as if by blinding illumination, when a prosecution psychiatrist pointed out the interesting moral arithmetic that, General Field Marshal Cinque M'Tume (Donald De Freeze) aside, the Army consisted of five other young women and two young men all of them white, middle class, educated, of altogether unexceptional background, and far better company and community than Weed and his friends could provide, almost a sort of homecoming after years of wandering in the desert. And she would have heard the laughter of the gods when, in exchange for promises of gentle and kindly understanding regarding possible future prosecutions, for example those having to do with Mel's Sporting Goods store and the later Sacramento bank robbery, Patty, who was soon to betroth herself to a cop, sang and sang and sang like a bird to the government prosecutors. (Charles Garry later told her that Patty was "a cold, calculating bitch.") But by then the weird incandescent high must have seemed to her a bizarre episode in someone else's life—Tania's to be precise—and the persons who shared and touched it so unreal and fantastical she could never possibly have addressed them as sister and brother. There was, however, by way of reminder, that little stone monkey which Willie ("Cujo") Wolfe had given her for a necklace as an emblem of his, I suppose, love.

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Books: MESSAGE FOR THE MEDIA

DECIDING WHAT'S NEWS:
A STUDY OF CBS EVENING NEWS, NBC NIGHTLY NEWS, NEWSWEEK AND TIME

Herbert J. Gans

Pantheon, $12.95, 393 pp.

Edwin Diamond

HERBERT GANS IS a distinguished sociologist who, in the best tradition of his profession, gets out of his study and spends time with the people he's writing about. This is called participant-observation in sociology; in journalism, the reporter who wins permission to watch others at work is known as a fly-on-the-wall. Previously, Gans has used this technique superbly to tell us about life in Boston's North End (*The Urban Villagers*) and life in suburbia (*The Levittowners*). Now he has done the same for national big-media journalism, visiting CBS News, NBC News, *Time*, and *Newsweek* as a sociological superfly. Nobody ought to bother to be a participant-observer ever again to find out how the news is made and how national news organizations work. Gans has now written *the* book on the subject. One of his sources said to him, you are trying to write down the unwritten rules of journalism. Gans has succeeded, and the rest of us—journalists as well as our readers and viewers—are in his debt. David Halberstam's Irving Wallace-style narrative, *The Powers That Be*, may be a better "summer read," but Gans delivers the real news about news.

Straight off, let me state my involvement in this book. On page 76, I am a friend "from college days" who opened the doors at *Newsweek* for participant-observer Gans. That was back in the late 1960s when I was a big-time editor at *Newsweek* and when Gans first started his research. He quotes me—and people I've known most of my professional life—throughout (the quotes are, quite properly, anonymous). But what he learned from us he has taken and put in a larger, systematic frame that helps insiders, especially insiders, understand what journalists do, why we do it, and what unconscious values help shape "objective" news coverage. Nobody can read his analysis without looking at television news and the news magazines—and by extension, other news outlets—in a fresh way.

Gans's achievement takes place on three levels. First, he has life at the news magazines and the television news organizations neatly figured out: the buying and selling of stories among editors and reporters; the relations between New York headquarters and the bureaus; the editorial jockeying for position and turf (ah! those duels on the staircase!); the ironic style of news magazine prose and the highlighting of the dramatic; television news with its greater space/time crunch, and the resulting "highlighting of the highlights." Gans goes out with a network reporter on a Washington assignment to cover a news conference on hunger. Poor people testify, so does a congressman, and New York's two senators, Jacob Javits and Robert Kennedy. The reporter figures not much newsworthy has happened—the anti-hunger movement is making its same points. But, he reasons, "New York" likes Bobby Kennedy stories. Son in his pitch he offers a film bite of Kennedy plus other highlights and a possible interview with two southern congressmen who will add drama and balance by denouncing the hunger do-gooders. The New York producer, as the reporter expected, buys only Kennedy, and only the highlight of it. That's all the reporter really wanted anyway; the rest were bargaining chips. (P.S. the Kennedy piece didn't make the final line-up, getting crowded out by other film.)

If anything, Gans is too kind in his description of editorial reality. He seldom permits himself a personal observation, or an irony, about the journalists he studied. When he does, for example, when his sociologist's eye spots an underlying conformity in big league journalist-individuals—that time when all the news magazine men began coming to the office in shirts with epaulets and all the women were going out and buying big glasses—we wish for a little more wicked observation and Halberstameanstyle anecdote. But Gans makes up for his small kindnesses with his analysis of news "objectivity"—his second major achievement.

The news, of course, is not objective. Some principles of selection must separate out certain actors and activities to make the news. As Gans puts it, journalists must *routinize* their task to make it manageable. Gans discusses four general models of selectivity and routine. One is *journalist-centered*, the idea that the news is shaped by the professional news judgments of journalists (Nixon-Agnew offered a demagogue's version of this model). A second model is *organizational-centered*, looking at structures, at divisions of labor and at cost considerations (social scientists favor this model). A third model is *event-centered*, so-called mirror theory, events determine the news, and journalists only hold up mirrors to reflect reality. A fourth model, really models, explains the news in terms of *outside determining forces*, sometimes technological (as in Marshall McLuhan), somtimes cultural or economic. Marxists, for example, may consider journalists as public relations people for capitalism, and the news as a new opiate of the masses.

While Gans sees some merit in each of these explanations, it's clear that none of the above suffices as an explanation for the news in America. Journalists obviously work in both an economic system and a nationl cultural environment. But, as Gans points out, the United States is also an aggregate of subinterests and subcultures. Gans's own model of the news stresses three elements—the power

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of official sources, the need for efficiency in news operations, and what he calls the paraideology of American journalists.

Names just don't make news; official names make news. Most news, Gans demonstrates, comes from those he calls the Knowns—the president, senators, representatives, government officials, mayors, police officers, corporation executives, church leaders, celebrities. Gans cites one content analysis of 2,850 foreign and domestic stories in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* (our two best papers). Almost eight in every ten of these stories, he says, came from public officials. The Unknowns—the poor, the black, the unemployed, the enlisted men in Vietnam—tend to make the news only when they appear to threaten or to confound the Knowns. Mostly, Unknowns don't get in the news. "Perhaps the place of ordinary people in the news," he writes, "is most dramatically illustrated by the day in 1974 when Congress approved a change in the pension law that affected millions of workers, and all the news media, daily and weekly, gave far more space and time, as well as headlines, to the appointment of Nelson Rockefeller to the second-highest office in the land."

The efficiency consideration that Gans speaks about is not industrial efficiency. A time/motion checker would find a lot of dawdling on the news assembly line (and a lot of dithering in the executive offices). But the news assembly line nevertheless demands the allocation of scarce resources—people, news space, air time. News organizations have to deliver news to their audiences at a prescheduled time, and this requirement in turn makes the Knowns—already powerful claimants of ink and air time—even more attractive sources of the news. The Knowns know how to stage news conferences, prepare press releases, provide photo opportunities and pervasively *use* the news machine. The president, our most known Known, is always seen and heard: he has source power and his White House image makers usually know how to serve up the news cheaply and quickly. On the other side, until recently, the Unknowns did not know how to stage-manage the news or their own images. To the extent that Unknowns, such as blacks, women, Chicanos, pro-lifers, gays and others have learned how to serve up materials the news machine needs, in ways it can use them, they have become better known.

THIRD, GANS ARGUES, the news is shaped by values as well as considerations of power and efficiency. Here, I think, Gans is at his best, and most useful. While journalists try to be objective, that is, fair and balanced, "neither they nor anyone else can, in the end, proceed without values." (That includes sociologists and book reviewers.) These values are not always explicit, although media consumers long ago learned to spot the more blatant locutions—the city "plagued by labor problems," or the fact that Stokely Carmichael "turned up" somewhere while on the same day the president "arrived" somewhere else. More fundamental are what Gans calls the Enduring Values in the news. He groups these Enduring Values under eight heads; admittedly his views are impressionistic, but they ring true. We recognize these olds in the news:

1. Ethnocentrism—American news values its own above all. American GI's die; the enemy dead is measured in "body counts."

2. Altruistic Democracy—Politics should be based on the public interest. Political machines are bad; waste is evil. Government officials must be closely watched. Political obstacles to democracy should be removed (though nothing very much is said about economic obstacles).

3. Responsible Capitalism—Business should be competitive, but ought not seek unreasonable profits or gross exploitation of workers. Poverty is bad, and the deserving poor need help, but welfare cheaters are a continuing menace—and are more newsworthy than people, other than the very rich, who cheat on their taxes.

4. Small Town Pastoralism—Cities breed crime, conflict and default; suburbs produce conformity and boredom. But the small town affirms the Jeffersonian values of nature and independence (apotheosized in Charles Kuralt's "On The Road").

5. Individualism—The freedom of the individual must be preserved against the inroads of society—and especially computers and data banks. New technology is dangerous. Self-made men and women attract coverage. So do mountain climbers, stubborn eccentrics and ethnics defending in their enclaves.

6. Moderatism—Individualism must not be carried too far. Extremism is bad, including atheism, religious fanaticism, and conspicuous consumption. The news scorns both highbrows and lowbrows. Political ideologies are suspect, but then so are politicians without principle.

7. Social Order—Threats to the nation, the society and the system are bad. Stability is good. After the 1960's ghetto riots, news organizations stressed the need for political and social reform—for more altruistic democracy and more responsible capitalism—to prevent the reoccurrence of trouble. The news, in short, supports the existing social order.

8. Leadership—Moral, competent leaders maintain the social order. Indeed, social process should be determined by people of skill and charisma, not by institutions.

Stepping back from these Enduring Values in the news, Gans sees an aggregate of beliefs that are not fully thought out, nor consistent nor well-integrated—the journalist's paraideology. Gans finds that it does not fit on any current conventional left-right scale in America. But, the contemporary journalist's Enduring Values are very much like the values of the Progressive Movement of the early twentieth century. The press is reformist, circa 1905.

Gans's description fits the national press, and many journalists might cherish it. Not Gans; in his final section he makes the case for another kind of press. Like the rest of us, Gans wants news that meets his needs and his values. He would like for himself a more liberal version of the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times,* but with far more news analysis and more stories about ordinary people. For America, he knows he has to ask for something a bit different. He wishes that the news carried more news

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of American society, of the Unknowns and the ignored. He would like to see stories told from the point of the bottom up, rather than from official sources and established authority. As a mild left-socialist, he wants more economic stories, more analysis of why wealth and power are still so unequally divided in America. He also wants stories about why corporations have so much power, about why poverty, unemployment, racism and sexism are still with us. He's not sure how many people will buy this kind of news, and his proposal for funding "bottom up" journalism through a quasi-national foundation is perhaps the weakest part of his book.

Still, as a realist, Gans doesn't want the journalist's non-integrated paraideology to become a consistent ideology, even a left ideology. That, he believes, would dampen the open-mindedness he sees in the best of journalism today. While Gans's case for more bottom up journalism hardly constitutes a radical proposal, it does provoke thought in a craft not given to reflection. Gans has made us look behind the news in a fresh way and think about what we see. I'm glad I helped open those doors for him back in the late 1960s.

REVIEWERS

EDWIN DIAMOND, a journalist and broadcast critic, heads the News Study group at M.I.T. His latest book, *Good News, Bad News,* was recently published by the M.I.T. Press.

RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS, a Lutheran pastor, is Senior Editor of *Worldview* and author most recently of *Freedom for Ministry.*

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PETER STEINFELS is executive editor of *Commonweal* and the author of *The Neo-conservatives, the Men Who Are Changing America's Politics,* about to be published by Simon & Schuster.

Denying both logic and history

THE CENTER OF CHRISTIANITY
John Hick
Harper & Row, $6.95, 128 pp.

Richard John Neuhaus

JOHN HICK gets himself into something of a bind, and that is too bad because the intention and intelligence behind the book are deserving of respect. In this rewrite of his *Christianity at the Center* (1970) Hick wants to set forth "the positive core of the Christian faith, leaving aside the mass of intellectual barnacles, now mostly only of historical interest." He is extremely confident about what is and is not believable to modern man, and is constantly asserting "recent" and "newly discovered" viewpoints that, as he surely knows, were perfectly familiar

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to the 19th-century liberal theological tradition to which Hick would be faithful. More successfully than many religious writers, Hick does make a convincing case for affirming the reality of God. The line of argument is similar to Karl Rahner's more thorough treatment of that subject in his recent and excellent *Foundations of Christian Faith*.

But the bind, indeed the multiple binds, into which Hick gets himself all have to do with his most explicit denial that Jesus is uniquely "Son of God." The denial of course comes as no surprise from the editor of the little book that caused a minor stir some while back, *The Myth of God Incarnate*. What is surprising is that Hick apparently has not recognized the implications of that denial for what he wants to assert about Jesus as "the center of Christianity." More orthodox apologists have argued that, on the basis of the evidence, we must decide whether Jesus is "mad, bad, or God." Hick says that is not the question, and perhaps it is not the best way of framing the choices. But Hick ends up re-framing the choices along infinitely less interesting lines; Jesus is mad, bad, or one of several models of self-giving love. Put that way, the debate hardly seems worth all the bother.

Hick suggests that choosing Jesus as one's favored "disclosure" of love is a matter of historical placement and cultural conditioning, but is nonetheless urgently important for the shaping of one's world. Perhaps so, but as he himself argues (citing Harvey Cox's *Secular City*), it is impossible to live quite fully without reference to religion in the modern world, certainly without any specifically Christian allegiance, and then, if one is of a religious bent, there are, he insists, all those equally valid "disclosures" in other religions. (Hick holds, quite inaccurately, I believe, that talk about "implicit faith" and "anonymous Christianity" is a clumsy and temporary expedient employed by Christian theologians to cover up their abandonment of the notion that Jesus the Christ is uniquely the universal savior.)

From time to time, Hick refers to Jesus as "Lord" but he does not explain how, without committing idolatry, it is possible to attribute a traditional title of divinity to one who, according to Hick, so obviously neither desired nor warrants it. Here and elsewhere one suspects that Hick's heart has reasons which he is determined not to let influence his argument. This is evident in the reasons he offers for belonging to the church. "Good or bad," writes Hick, "the church was inevitable; for Jesus' message is one that inevitably draws people together." True, but for what are they drawn together? According to Hick, if the church were really united in being what it should be, it could "assign appropriately trained representatives to study the various aspects of the society in which it lives and to lead experiments in Christian service to that society. The church will have energy and resources to look outwards and to serve God by serving the neighbor." Nice ideas, to be sure, but very limp as reasons for belonging to the church.

Hick's reasons for membership in the Christian community defy both logic and history. Logic, because on his own account of the dismal state of the church and the bright possibility in the secular world, the church would be among the least likely places to exercise the self-giving love one discovers in Jesus. And his reasons defy history because—and again Hick surely knows this—the early Christians were not drawn together in order to improve the world but in order to encounter God in Christ in the doing of the eucharist for his remembrance. In short, they gathered to worship. Worship and all that encompasses—sacraments, preaching, prayer—are never once mentioned by Hick. Understandably so, since worship presupposes that Jesus is who Hick says he is not. Whatever else Christians have said and done about Jesus, they have worshipped him. Apart from and against that fact it is quite possible to affirm some "true message of Jesus" but one ought to make quite clear that one is not then describing the historical phenomenon "Christianity."

Just possibly, Hick could agree with that judgment. But, he might answer, his purpose is to change that historical phenomenon called Christianity by moving it into a new and more reasonable engagement with the modern world. That is an honorable purpose, and the invitation to theological debate should be welcomed. Such debate, without acrimony or judicial threats, can give new credibility to the idea that what one believes really does matter. The problem is that the "new directions" Hick wants to explore are, for the most part, well-beaten paths that catholic Christianity has long since found to be dead-ended.

Hick further discourages the debate he invites by his seeming imperviousness to the implications of what he says. For instance, some years ago he wrote an admirable book on theodicy, *Evil and the God of Love*. There and in later works he exposes the horror of history and explores, sometimes imaginatively, various theories of reincarnation and other extra-historical vindications. But he knows that along that route lies a relativizing of reality that can, as in some Hindu thought, reduce this life to illusion. Pulling back from that brink, Hick now writes: "We should accept our mortality as something God has ordained in his wise love and so live that like the best humanists we can say: 'I do not at present *mind* whether there is an after-life or not; I do not need one to make this life acceptable, for it is acceptable already in its own right.' " But if there is anything that Hick himself has made clear (especially in his study of theodicy, but also here) and that thoughtful people know with brutal force, it is that this life is not acceptable. Except for the deliberately blind, it is unacceptable in its satisfactions and, most important, it is unacceptable morally. Given that realization, one can adopt the Stoic posture of building meaning upon the foundation of unyielding despair, or the Hindu belief that the horror is illusory. Hick rejects the first and is tempted toward the second, but then, inexplicably falls back upon the nostrum that things aren't so bad after all. Talk about the consummation and vindication of historical experience is not, as Hick here suggests, a matter of entertaining some interesting possibilities while, at the same time, getting on with the business of a basically all right existence. In biblical faith this life has meaning only as it is directed toward, and is lived from,

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the promise of the coming Kingdom of God.

Once more it is apparent that incarnation is the rub. One can take history with religious seriousness and this life as definitive because God has become history in Jesus. God has become history but history is not God. One can hope beyond this historical experience because at the heart of its pathos is the Risen Lord who has triumphed over death, which is otherwise the negation of all our meanings. Hick's inability to affirm these claims of catholic Christianity, joined to his evident desire to be part of that Christianity, results in a sentimentalized "message of Jesus," an implausible church, and an ultimate hope that comes close to being evasive fancy. It finally does come down to that most elementary creed of the early Christians, "Jesus is Lord." And that, as one reflects on it, comes down to something like incarnation. Hick is undoubtedly right—Jesus, not the doctrine of the incarnation, is the center of Christianity. But his own argument tends to confirm rather than to challenge the assertion that the truth of Christianity, precisely because he is the center, requires that Jesus be God incarnate.

At age 90, a life story

CHAMBER MUSIC

Doris Grumbach
Dutton, $8.95, 213 pp.

Eleanor B. Wymard

WHEN THE LITERARY critic turns to writing fiction, his words as reviewer should never serve to haunt. But they always do.

In a critique for the *Washington Post* this past summer of Tillie Olsen's *Silences*, Doris Grumbach makes the claim that the "passion of [Olsen's] thesis leads her into all kinds of error." Yet Caroline Newby Maclaren, the Victorian heroine of Grumbach's third novel, *Chamber Music*, seems scarcely to be alive. Grumbach's technique is to allow Carrie Maclaren, at age 90, to create herself through the narration of her own life-story: "And so it was for me, Caroline Newby, raised by a lonely, heartbroken mother, taught to play the piano by the wordless Mrs. Seton, affianced to a prodigy who first loved his mother and then a man, once and fatally (I have now come to believe) before his marriage to me, a wife caught in a joyless, dutiful marriage, and freed from it at last by the deadly journey of infection through the rivers of her husband's blood. And then, after discovering love, unlikely and unsuspected, in a woman who dispelled her loneliness, left behind by her death, more alone than ever before, deserted by the single point of light, the one glowing coal, in a long, cold, dark life."

At age 17 in 1893, Caroline marries Robert Glencoe Maclaren, a young American musician who his temporarily interrupted his studying in Germany to return to Boston. Having high aspirations for his talent, Robert wants, eventually, to write and conduct his own compositions. Before dying at the age of 34, Robert repeatedly fulfills his dreams and is lionized for his triumphs well beyond the end of his days.

Readers who know *Silences* will inevitably draw thematic parallels between Olsen's long literary essay and Grumbach's novel. Olsen laments the lost art of our "silenced people," those persons—particularly women—who never have experienced the birth of their own poetry, music, and painting because cultural constraints have limited their time and space to create.

Chamber Music has natural affinities with the theme of *Silences*, for Caroline Newby never thinks twice about giving up her own music career: "To the musical world Robert was a much beloved figure. But this public man, this famous man, was important also to me, who needed private love so much. His indifference and discontent with me seemed at the time of no great moment beside his fame. He was renowned, a talented musician, a 'composer of genius,' many

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critics had already written. My contributory existence and auxiliary services, like my small, thin physique, were of no account in his light. History must be full of such alliances between famous men and their satellite, serving wives. *Their true persons and their inner lives are rarely known or described in the painful and almost faithless detail I have given here.*" [Italics mine.] Here precisely is the narrative problem of *Chamber Music*. Grumbach's point of view is so patently and consistently that of Caroline Maclaren that the novel is essentially bankrupt. By using the diary form, Caroline Maclaren believes that she is drawing us into the mysterious territory of "inner lives," but, on the contrary, she seldom does. Too much a child of her Victorian era—as, perhaps, she must be—Caroline neither probes nor confronts, for example, the blatant fact of her husband's incestuous relationship with his mother. " 'Did you share this . . . room with your mother before I came?' I asked him. I was afraid to say 'bed.'

"At first he did not answer. His silence told me I had made a mistake to question him. . . . 'Yes.' Then he closed his eyes and slept or seemed to sleep. I lay awake, filled with fear of the great expanse of blackness outside the four posts, an inexplicable terror for the future."

Because language is Caroline's key to unlocking her past self, it is inconsistent that her terror, at such moments, need be "inexplicable" and inarticulate. Caroline is also imprisoned by words, for example, when suddenly discovering her mother-in-law, stretched out on the bed, "her face buried in Robert's pillow, her shoulders shaking although no sound could be heard. One of her hands seemed to be under her lower body, which moved convulsively, up and down, up and down over the hand." While reanimating this shocking moment from her past, Caroline still wonders to her journal: "How do I put down on this paper my feeling of inadequacy, so profound that it began early in my marriage to Robert and lasted until his death downstairs?" Although Caroline feels an urgent need to document her existence, at important moments, words, ironically, continue to fail her.

By writing in the first person, Grumbach continually weakens the psychorealism of Caroline Maclaren. As narrator, she simply does not probe the complexity of the subject matter which is herself. The passion of the novel might have been intensified had Grumbach used a central intelligence to journey into Caroline's mind Such a narrator would not be limited only to apprehending experience, as Caroline so often is, but would also see beyond the "inexplicable," thereby gaining access into Caroline's deeper self.

Clarity and elegance of style account, however, for the distinction of *Chamber Music*. Robert's agonizing death from syphilis is terrifyingly lucid and graphic. Always a sullen, anti-social man, Robert was nevertheless the master of his own existence. But in the last stages of syphilis, "paralyzed and demented, there [Robert] sat through spring and summer, always smiling gently, his eyes fixed vacantly on the picture of a cow jumping over a moon." For the price of his homosexuality, Grumbach could not have Robert suffer any more than he does.

Despite months of caring intimately for her husband, Caroline must still be told by Anna Baehr, the nurse who comes to help her, that " 'Mr. Maclaren is dying of syphilis in its final, tertiary stage.' . . . I was aghast. Did I know? Did I suspect and refuse to let myself know? . . . But now I knew. Anna was incredulous of my innocence." After the death of Robert, *Chamber Music* becomes a parable of tender human regeneration as Caroline experiences sexual awakening in a lesbian relationship with Anna, who lives with her for 12 years before dying of influenza. Different from the stench of death which had filled the Maclaren household as a result of Robert's homosexual relationship with Christopher Weeks, the home blooms with signs of life when Anna and Carrie draw more closely together. "We looked up and smiled at each other, holding hands in the fragrant soil surrounding the young roots of the wisteria vine." Caroline does find happiness in Anna's bed, but their pleasure is intensified in nature. Such closeness with nature establishes their strong identity, but, again, one wished from Caroline more understanding of their love: "The sensual pleasure we shared resulted, I have often thought, from the guesses we had made about ourselves and the answers we found in each other. Now I knew another like myself. My suppositions were confirmed." Caroline approaches self-awareness, but we experience and know only what Caroline herself does. Further insight into the relationship of Anna and Carrie is thus arrested.

After Anna's death, Caroline lives through 50 years of silence until now, when she has been "asked to write the history of a man." Public interest has also been rekindled in the Maclaren Community, a summer colony for young artists established on the Maclaren farm in memory of Robert. The colony and its idea were destroyed long ago, however, by a fire set by a young man who once had loved Anna. Very close to the end of her life, Caroline Maclaren thus finds reason to write her dispassionate journal. But, shielded by the restraint of an elegant prose, a profound anger exists in Doris Grumbach's *Chamber Music*. That anger, once discovered, erupts through the surface of the novel's refinement to become, for the reader, deeply troubling. For example, shortly after Robert's death, Lawrence Vandersee, Chairman, Department of Music, Columbia University, writes to Caroline about the death of Professor Christopher Weeks: "Professor Weeks died last summer after a long illness. He had left the faculty during the spring semester before, suffering from a long series of afflictions, to the liver, to the skin, and finally, I must tell you, to his mental faculties. Regretably, we were forced to ask for his resignation." While premature death also interrupts the liaison between Caroline and Anna, somehow life, not decay, is their heritage: "The wisteria Anna planted now blooms outside my bedroom window. Her memory for me has grown, reached up, covered, and supported the rest of my life." The imbalance in the rewards of the four lovers, however slim, is intensely disturbing.

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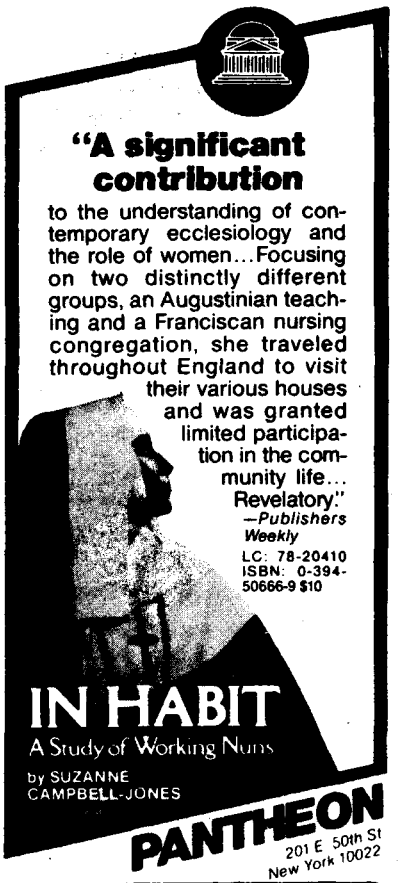
In the act of writing her journal, Carolina Maclaren finds a meager source of strength which helps her to face the last days of her life. The experience provides her with her only knowledge of felt time. Having spent her life in service to the tyranny of Robert's schedule and the grinding routine of nursing him, she thinks only of being set free from the confines of man-measured time to live with Anna in their own unique rhythm. A very old woman, Caroline anticipates an existence set on juxtaposition to the measured minutes of her experiental world. Vulnerable neither to sentiment nor optimism, Caroline awaits the constant companionship of Anna. Together, they will exist in natural time with the seasons, counter to the beat of the metronome: ". . . . I remember her way of protecting our trees from insects, her assurance that their brittle little skewered carcasses would enrich the roots. I still cannot believe in a higher purpose or a kindly Providence that will unite us. So I wait for the time when my remains will join hers to serve the useful soil."

To paraphrase Virginia Woolf's evaluation of George Eliot's *Middlemarch*, *Chamber Music* is, in the best sense of the word, a very adult book: "a magnificent book which with all its imperfections is one of the few [English] novels written for grown-up people."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A Study of Working Nuns
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PANTHEON
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New York 10022

Is the family in grave trouble?

FAMILIES
Jane Howard
Simon and Schuster, $9.95, 282 pp.

CRITICAL THEORY OF THE FAMILY
Mark Poster
Seabury, $14.95, 233 pp.

Thomas V. McGovern

AS I LISTEN to the students in my classes on mental health and personal adjustment, I hear strong voices and feelings about their families. Many of them have serious doubts about the future of the "nuclear family." Almost all of these persons yearn for the stability, the certainty, and the emotional support and intimacy which a traditional family is supposed to provide. In a recent class when I asked for a show of hands of those who have divorced or separated parents, over half the class nervously acknowledged that reality. I understand why they were realistically pessimistic about their prospects. There were signs of relief. Some felt better knowing that they were not alone. Others felt happier for the stability of their parents' relationships. The more we talked, however, the more relief was transformed into uncertainty. These students had taken seriously the finding reported in Vaillant's recent research, *Adaptation to Life*, that mid-life mental health was most highly correlated with the presence of stable, intimate marital relationships.

Are families in trouble? In her book, *Families*, Jane Howard shares her conversations with a variety of folks about this topic. Her questions were simple. What stereotypes about families ought to be abolished? Is blood still thicker than water? Can friendship replace kinship? How important to a family are ritual, myth and religion; sense of place, property, history and purpose; elders, founders, networks of outsiders? To what extent do adversity and guilt hold families together?

After attending one too many academic conferences on the past, present and future of families, Howard sought to let the people who are in families speak for themselves. Her book is best when she does just that. Howard has conversations with members of a Greek clan in Massachusetts, some Virginia country kin, an evangelist-patriarch of eighteen children, and an affluent New York City family. She discovers that it takes work to accomplish connectedness so well. Her interviews with single parents, with commune members, and with a lesbian couple highlight the gropings for new forms of family experience. Howard's book pulses and thrives when she lets the people she meets describe their chiefs, their hospitality, their com-

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munications network, their experiences of tragedy and prosperity, and their rituals. At these moments, the reader can feel the affection which connects individuals to one another.

All too often, though, Howard's musings about critical issues, her armchair analyses about this "best of times" and "worst of times" for families, are distracting. While she criticizes the academics for their jargon, she clutters her interviews with scholarly namedroppings. In the midst of an interaction between two lesbians who are struggling for the custody and welfare of a child, for example, Howard sees fit to tell them of a French historian's speech on polarity, vitality and third genders. While we have seen a number of examples of this style of writing in recent years, most notably Gail Sheehy's *Passages*, I've always preferred the clarity of Studs Terkel's approach in *Working* and *Hard Times*. He lets the interviewees tell their stories without making obstrusive comments.

Mark Poster's book, *Critical Theory of the Family*, is unadulterated scholarship. As a social historian, he brings to the analysis of family a critical perspective. After reviewing the concepts of family articulated by Freud, Marx, Parsons, Erickson, and the communication theory/family therapy school, Poster describes the elements of a critical theory of the family and models of family structure. What is most provocative about this book is Poster's criticism of the bourgeois model of family structure which most theorists have accepted with little question. For the psychologist/psychiatrist engaged in the psychotherapy of families, the maintenance of the "nuclear family" dictates both treatment method and the definition of successful outcome. For the sociologist who researches patterns of change and dysfunction in family structure, the norm for comparison remains the middle class "nuclear family." Poster advocates more agnosticism in our current beliefs about family patterns and structure. As a historian, he writes cogently about the merits of studying the aspects of three other types of family structure, the aristocratic, the peasant, and the proletarian/working class family. Such an argument is refreshing in its appeal, but as a researcher, I would find the task overwhelming in proportion. Poster does, however, provide a comprehensive framework and hints at a methodology for the beginning of a new look at family.

Although these two books about families are strikingly different, both share an important insight about how we connect with one another. The best data on which to judge what families really are come from the reports of the people who live in them, yearn for them, and prosper from them. Poster asks for a description of daily life as a primary source of what defines the family. Howard achieves that description often and with vitality.

Are families dying? We are reminded too often of the casualties. The evidence from these two books would indicate they are not. Our human tolerance for change, for ambiguity, and for floundering, however, is clearly being tested. I cannot agree more with Jane Howard who concludes her book with these thoughts. "Maybe the hawk can be kept at bay if we give more thought to our tribes and our clans and our several kinds of families. No aim seems to me more urgent, nor any achievement more worthy of a psalm. So *hosanna in excelsis*, and blest be the tie that binds. And please pass the salt."

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In brief

TAKE A BISHOP LIKE ME, *by Paul Moore, Jr., Harper & Row, $8.95, 256 pp.*

The Episcopalian Bishop of New York has written a very personal book about his involvement in two controversies that have their counterparts in all the churches and in secular life: the ordination of women, and of homosexuals. It is clearly and engagingly written. Paul Moore's personality emerges unmistakably, as he interweaves his personal experiences with two particular constellations of events. First he tells of the unauthorized ordination of nine women by three of his fellow-bishops in Philadelphia in 1974, which took him unaware, and the ensuing conflict which ground him unmercifully between canon law and his personal concern for the particular women from his diocese. Second he tells of his ordination of Ellen Barrett, known to the bishop as homosexual in "orientation," and then to newspaper and magazine readers as a "practicing" homosexual. Bishop Moore's story of the mounting furor, which includes a number of letters and articles on the subject, is the most interesting part of the book. Standard hate letters starkly confront expressions of gratitude from Christian homosexuals, and the bishop's comments show that he has been learning a great deal about psychology over the years. Bishop

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Moore's account of many of the bishops' attacks on him is admirably restrained, but his chagrin at the unjustified vituperation is movingly expressed in the reprint of a speech which he gave to the House of Bishops. This patrician WASP, of Morristown, St. Paul's School and Yale, has had a great ministry among the poor and deprived, and his *apologia* speaks intimately to his readers of a Christian bishop, grounded in the scriptures and the sacramental life, also willing to share the pain and confusion of ordinary Christians.

FREDERICK SHRIVER

DOMESTIC AFFAIRS: AMERICAN PROGRAMS & PRIORITIES, *by James Duffy, Simon and Schuster, $10.95,* 309 pp.

James Duffy belongs to a rare and endangered species known as the New Dealer *(Homo tabularum novarum).* Like the passenger pigeon, the New Dealer once filled the skies with its numbers. As recently as the presidency of Lyndon B. Johnson, a sizable flock inhabited Washington. Today they are almost all gone.

The New Dealer has distinctive traits. You can recognize one by the incorrigible belief that government should and can (it is hard to say which of those verbs has become more controversial recently) do much to improve the lives, and especially the material well-being, of citizens. The New Dealer believes in the federal government as the leading engine of reform; believes generally in "leadership" and in "concern"; and—a characteristic shared with that related species, the Progressive—believes that these virtues, energetically exercised, can overcome prejudice, greed, self-interest and neglect. Contrary to careless reports, New Dealers are not doctrinaire. They show a striking weakness, if anything, in the opposite direction. Unlike the Marxists who have stolen their environmental niche in academia or the neoconservatives who have replaced them in Washington, New Dealers have a relatively simple political philosophy: they expect results, they try this or that in an effort to achieve them, they don't worry overmuch about subtle consequences, historical ironies or intricate theorizing.

The very structure of *Domestic Affairs* reveals its author's species. The book begins with the "Economic Bill of Rights," included in FDR's 1944 State of the Union message. (It is instructive to recall such texts at a time when various observers insist that "over-promising" was a nefarious invention of the '60s and did not mark our earlier "pragmatic" politics: "True individual freedom," declared Roosevelt, "cannot exist without economic security and independence." Political rights alone were insufficient. They had to be supplemented by: "The right to a useful and remunerative job. . .

The right of every businessman, large and small, to trade in an atmosphere of freedom from unfair competition and domination by monopolies. . . . The right of every family to a decent home. . . . The right to adequate medical care. . . . The right to adequate protection from the economic fears of old age, sickness, accident and unemployment. . . . The right to a good education.")

James Duffy proceeds to examine exactly how far the nation has progressed—or not progressed—toward assuring these "rights." He also examines how well Congress has served (selecting the cases of education and energy policy) and the presidency has performed under its Democratic and Republican occupants.

The book, in effect,is a report card—he uses the image himself—and like a report card it is straightforward, departmentalized, handing out a B-plus here, a C-minus there. Like a report card, it also lacks the unifying theoretical thrust that we look for in political analyses, the key that will satisfy our need for larger explanations to order the rush and swirl of political change.

Poor James Duffy. He has given us an honest accounting—modulated, documented, sensible, useful, compassionate, and good-intentioned. No wonder New Dealers can't survive. Doesn't he know that this is 1979?

PETER STEINFELS

Commonweal welcomes letters on subjects treated in its pages. Letters of not more than 250 or 300 words naturally have a better chance of being published.

Correspondence

(Continued on page 354)

superior knowledge of Geography, and probably History. If it's all that simple perhaps Frank would like to try his hand at solving irredentist claims in Israel/Palestine?

You are 100 percent right Frank, we dropped the bomb twice, but not on Russia, and the whole idea, way back then in those "oh so idealistic" days was to save American lives, perhaps a half million or more. *WE* didn't bomb Pearl Harbor, Frank, *THEY* did.

And, Frank wants to save money from the military budget. How's this for savings, Frank: a fleet of 350 (+ or - 25) B-52 aircraft, first hatched in 1950. A Navy that has fewer ships now than in 1952. An Air Force whose twenty-odd wings of fighter aircraft are still heavily populated with 1950-vintage F-4 Phantoms. A manpower pool that is quadrupled by the USSR, a Tank Corps that is outnumbered 5 to 1 by Warsaw Pact forces in Eastern Europe alone. A submarine force that is outnumbered 3.2:1 worldwide, Tactical Air Forces that are outnumbered 2.5:1 in Eastern Europe alone. An MX missile that may have a dozen units on line by 1984 if the administration says "yes" today, while the Soviets in the last 4 years alone have made operational 3 SS-teen series missiles (and MIRVed too, Frank), an Air Defense force comprised of 300 aged F-106 and equally long-toothed F-4 aircraft to meet an expected fleet of 500 Backfires by 1984, . . .

And those lovely Cubans Frank. Sure, they don't bother us fighting those wars of liberation, but how about the folks in Angola, Mozambique, Rhodesia, Ethiopia, Somalia, Zaire, et cetera.

Next time you want to vent your spleen on somebody, try HEW. They spend 2.2 times the money DOD does and give you 110% less defense (and job stability).

I'm mailing you a towel under separate cover, Frank. Free! J. A. RONDEAU

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